

**THE *AFRIKADEUTSCHEN* OF KROONDAL
1849 - 1949**

by

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Summary

The history of the *Afrikadeutschen* of Kroondal that began with the formation of the Hermannsburg Mission Society in 1849 and that grew to encompass a century of German nationalism over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, provides an important dimension to the greater story of German immigration and settlement in South Africa. It is a narrative in which the position of the community's growing association with their adopted landscape or *Heimat* serves to create the inevitable counterpoint to their ideological identity as Germans and thereby too, its reconciliation in the name *Afrikadeutsche* (African-Germans).

Situated in the North-West province of South Africa, the community of Kroondal displays a unique collection of archival and literary source material that along with the this dissertation's use of the specifically German descriptors *Heimat* and *Deutschtum* (Germanness) then serve as the basis for its investigation into its African-German identity.

Key Words

Afrikadeutschen, Deutschtum, German minority, Germanness, Heimat, Hermannsburg , Identity, Kroondal

Abbreviations

ABW	Anglo-Boer War
B.D.M	<i>Bund Deutscher Mädel</i> (League of German Girls)
D.J.S.A	<i>Deutsche Jugend Südafrikas</i> (German Youth of South Africa)
HMS	Hermannsburg Missionary Society

Chapter 1. A German Diaspora

Those German communities that are positioned around the world and which lie outside of the German state often display a sense of identity and cultural awareness that seems to surpass those of Germany itself. While there is no simplistic or for that matter singular description of what encompasses German identity, there is an archetypal image of Germanness that has remained part of popular thought and that frequently finds expression amongst these communities. A fitting portrayal of such an image is seen in the response to a quote from the controversial German literary figure Maria Kahle, in the book *The Heimat Abroad*:

An idealized German village presented a charming scene for a visitor in 1933: “clean curtains fluttered in front of polished, white-framed windows, and a flower garden bloomed in front of every house. . . . the flowers of grandmother’s *Heimat* grew there.” Surprisingly, the settlement was in Brazil rather than Bavaria. It just as easily could have been nestled in the deserts of Namibia, the steppes of the Ukraine, or the plains of the Dakotas. How did it get there? Was it really German? If so, what made it German?¹

This response, with the questions, “How and why did they arrive?” and, “What did they become once they had arrived?” remains the essential impetus of any investigation on immigrant communities and will similarly accompany this dissertation’s own examination of the identity of the German South African community of Kroondal. The purpose of this introduction is to engage with the first of these questions, namely “How did they get there?” whereupon the primary focus of the dissertation can then be developed into an encounter with the two remaining questions namely, “Was it really German? And if so, what made it German?”

The event of German immigration is an event only in so far that it encompasses many separate occurrences over the span of centuries. To make matters worse, it is not even possible to refer to “German” immigration prior to 1871 without being conscious of the fact that Germany was not yet in existence and that the word “German” merely referred to a loose collection of states whose inhabitants shared degrees of cultural, ethnic and

¹ K. O’Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, p. 1.

linguistic origins.² This does not suppose, however, that a German national consciousness had not come into existence prior to the realization of modern Germany, but rather that these notions of national unity were outweighed by the prevailing political realities of those times. Added to this are the cultural and confessional divides that served to lend further diversity to the German territories and which mean that any simple explanation for German migration will remain as idealized a notion as that of a singular German national consciousness.³ With this in mind it is not the intention of this dissertation to delve into the broader complexities of the German diaspora, as it is frequently referred to, but rather to use this introduction to place the community of Kroondal in the context of global German migrations and settlements.

The term “diaspora”, although traditionally synonymous with the scattering of the Jewish people from the Holy Land in the 8th and 9th centuries, has steadily come to be used by modern historians in order to describe other similar human upheavals or migrations among populations around the globe. In this vein, the Harvard Dictionary defines diaspora as being “the dispersion of any people from their original homeland”. Although the term has become an increasingly popular descriptor in historical and social studies, some scholars now insist that a set of parameters should be instituted in order to discern more carefully the applicability of the term to a particular event.⁴ One such set of “diasporic criteria” that appears to have general support is that based upon Robin Cohen’s *Global Diasporas: an introduction*:

To qualify as a diaspora, the group should share some basic features: dispersal from a common homeland; a collective memory, myth, and idealization of the homeland; a commitment to its maintenance or creation; the development of a return movement; strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time; a troubled relationship with host societies; and empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries.⁵

While there is still no consensus as to the exact requirements for the use of the diasporic label, there has been enough debate among scholars to warrant a degree of caution before proceeding to use the term as a descriptor of German emigration between the

² C. Krebs, *A Most Dangerous Book*. 2011, p. 21.

³ M. Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 1990, pp. 4&6.

⁴ R. Cohen, *Global Diasporas - an introduction*. 2008. p. 1.

⁵ K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, p. 5.

seventeenth and twentieth centuries.⁶ To this effect, the editors of the book, *The Heimat Abroad*, can be seen to support the idea of “plural diasporas” which not only makes conscious allowances for the range of circumstances that can all be regarded as diaspora, but also recognizes the existence of religious, political and regional divides within what might otherwise appear as ostensibly singular diasporic events.⁷ As such, the idea of a German diapsora must be seen as a complex event, collectively spanning centuries and including multiple watersheds that encompass foreign occupations, industrialization, evangelical revivals, imperialism, economic depressions, Nazism and numerous and terrible wars.

The onset of large-scale German migration in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries appears to have been less of an onset and more of an expansion of an already existing propensity for Germans to journey away from their home communities in search of better opportunities.⁸ In the study *Migration, Migration History, History*, contributor Georg Fertig examines this tendency towards migration with the specific focus on the transatlantic movement of Germans over the course of the eighteenth century and theorizes on some of the dominant causes that precipitated this event. Fertig’s observations reveal a number of factors that had a pivotal influence in encouraging a spatially mobile German society by the eighteenth century. These include large-scale events such as the Reformation and the Thirty Years War while also acknowledging other, underlying factors such as the remnants of feudal law, the practice of servitude and professional specialization, along with the travels of the destitute in search of charity (alms).⁹ When seen in this context the movement of German immigrants to locations outside of Europe and across the globe has as much to do with existing traditions of mobility as it does with any single cause that may have served to hasten their departure. When considered together with the rapidly developing trade routes to the new European colonies, it meant that migrants were offered new alternatives in their search for opportunities to better their positions in life.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, German emigration began to enter its highest levels with close to six million Germans choosing to leave the lands of their birth over the course of that century. Although most of these migrants made their way to North American destinations, significant numbers, estimated at hundreds of thousands, journeyed to other

⁶ R. Cohen, *Global Diasporas - an introduction*. 2008. pp. 1-4.

⁷ K. O’Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, p. 6.

⁸ J & L Lucassen, *Migration, Migration History, History*, 2005, p. 280.

⁹ J & L Lucassen, *Migration, Migration History, History*, 2005, pp. 277-279.

areas that included Australia, Africa and South America. The causes of this staggering departure are once again varied and encompass a range of social, political, economic and most importantly, personal factors that generally escape attempts at accurate generalizations.¹⁰ However, this has not prevented scholars from trying to understand better the nature of the German exodus during a period that has more than enough probable causes to explain such a flood of emigration. Of these, one of the most commonly offered theories is centered around the so called “push-pull” factors that identify a set of circumstances thought to be capable of precipitating a migration of this scale. While authors such as Fertig deride the traditional “push-pull” reasoning as a “vague laundry list” of possible explanations, it nevertheless represents a sizable portion of the recent historiography and must therefore be included as a probable descriptor of the German diaspora.¹¹

The aspects that constitute probable “push” factors are frequently related to the difficult period that faced much of Europe in its transition from an agriculturally based society to that of an industrial economy. The industrial revolution, as it has since become known, witnessed significant social upheaval as the population centres began to move away from rural areas in order to seek better opportunities within the burgeoning urban centres. Other factors such as restrictions on the granting of marriage licences and widespread military conscription also frequently encouraged young individuals to journey in search of better opportunities elsewhere.

When social and economic conditions such as these were compounded by hardships such as crop failures and famine, the numbers of emigrants surged into what authors describe as migratory “waves” departing Germany.¹² When viewed collectively, these “push” factors typically describe the conditions within the country of origin whereas “pull” factors are typically regarded as those conditions within the country of destination that made immigration an attractive alternative to prospective migrants. Viewed in combination, the various “push-pull” theories that have been put forward certainly offer a range of plausible, if generalized, explanations of the phenomenon of German emigration.¹³

¹⁰ J. Tampke, *The Germans in Australia*, 2006, p. 7.

¹¹ J & L Lucassen, *Migration, Migration History, History*, 2005, p. 272.

¹² J. Tampke, *The Germans in Australia*, 2006, pp. 8-11.

¹³ J. Tampke, *The Germans in Australia*, 2006, pp. 13-15.

While historians and sociologists continue to reassess the complex causes that precipitated the flow of migrants from Germany in the nineteenth century, one of the most important themes that characterize that era of European history is the rise of German nationalism. Although the emergence of various forms of German national consciousness preceded the developments of the nineteenth century, it has been argued that its catalyst came in the form of the Napoleonic Wars, together with the growth of nationalist ideology within other Western Europe states.¹⁴ In this respect, Germany had remained well behind the rest of its neighbours as a loose configuration of kingdoms and principalities under the banner of the Holy Roman Empire (excluding Prussia).¹⁵ It was not until Napoleon's invasion and reorganization of the German states into the Confederation of the Rhine in 1806, that the German political landscape began to experience the necessary impetus that was required to move it towards unification.¹⁶ Although Napoleon's political confederation of Germany did not outlive his own fall from power in 1813, many of the social and economic structures that he instituted remained unchanged.¹⁷ These were, however, largely overshadowed by a rapid return to political conservatism following the Congress of Vienna, which was convened in 1814 to decide upon the future of the German states. This process that was dominated by the conservative Austrian chancellor Clemens von Metternich, saw the nationalist hopes of a united Germany dismissed and the establishment of a confederation of 39 German states.¹⁸

Over the course of the next 30 years the combination of Germany's political repression and the socio-economic burdens of industrialization helped to create an environment that triggered what has become known as the 1848 Revolutions. Inspired by the revolutionary events in France during that same year, in which the French monarch King Louis Phillipe was overthrown, various segments of German society, beginning with the peasant classes, rose up in waves of unrest to express their dissatisfaction at the current dispensation.¹⁹ In response, the largely middle-class proponents of nationalist and liberal ideologies quickly seized the opportunity to further their own desires of altering German autocracy and attempted to direct the revolts towards full revolution.

¹⁴ D. Orlow, *A History of Modern Germany. 1871 to Present*, 1995, p. 4.

¹⁵ M. Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 1990, p. 1.

¹⁶ M. Kitchen, *A History of Modern Germany 1800 to the Present*, 2012, p. 9.

¹⁷ M. Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 1990, p. 107.

¹⁸ D. Orlow, *A History of Modern Germany. 1871 to Present*, 1995, p. 5.

¹⁹ T. Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismark 1800-1866*, 1996, p. 237.

Although these spontaneous uprisings were initially met with concessions by the various German heads of state, it quickly became evident that the revolutionaries were largely divided among themselves as to the exact nature of the reform that they were seeking. It followed that by 1849, the March Revolutions, as these events became known, had been thwarted, sending thousands of their liberal proponents into forced migration and exile. These “Forty-Eighters”, as they are commonly referred to by American historians, represent a distinct group of migrants who were largely comprised of young and educated individuals, that were seeking refuge as a result of their role in the revolutions.²⁰ Although the numbers of this group of immigrants hardly made an impact upon the overall influx of Germans into America, they do represent an important contingent whose identity as immigrants was characterized by an increased awareness of their national consciousness.

In the wake of the 1848 revolutions, Germany quickly returned to a path of political conservatism and yet at the same time, showed no hesitation of pursuing liberal economic policies that helped to create ample opportunities for industrial growth and trade.²¹ In this vein, the establishment of a *Zollverein* (free trade) throughout the Confederation had gradually allowed the northern Prussian state to replace Austria as the economic leader within the German lands and in so doing, set the stage for the eventual unification of Germany under Prussian leadership.²² Ultimately, it was over the course of three decisive wars and through political maneuvering of the Prussian chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, that German unification was eventually realized in 1871.²³

The creation of a united Germany, however, did not automatically translate into a united national identity or consciousness. As the historian, Mary Fulbrook, writes, “what had been engineered, under Bismarck’s guidance, was effectively the extension of Prussian power rather than the expression of nationalist enthusiasm for a united Germany”.²⁴ This reality, of a disparate German people and culture, would remain a tangible element within the new German *Reich*, that similarly remained conscious of the hegemony that Prussian influence held over the country.²⁵ This is not to say that the birth of a united Germany did not instil a great deal of pride in many Germans both within and outside of the country’s borders.

²⁰ J. Hermand & J. Steakley, *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland. The German Sense of Belonging*, 1996, pp. 27-28.

²¹ M. Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 1990, p. 123.

²² D. Orlow, *A History of Modern Germany. 1871 to Present*, 1995, pp. 6-10.

²³ M. Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 1990, p. 129.

²⁴ M. Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 1990, p. 129.

²⁵ D. Orlow, *A History of Modern Germany. 1871 to Present*, 1995, p. 41.

Sources indicate that many German expatriates expressed immense pride at the political realization of a German Empire.²⁶ While the pattern of German emigration continued throughout this period, reaching its all-time peak in the early 1880's, the internal migration of Germans to industrial centres significantly outnumbered those who were leaving the country.²⁷

By the end of the nineteenth century, the realization of German unification began to add a new dimension to the existing pattern of emigration as Germany joined the ranks of European colonial empires. The acquisition of colonies such as German South West and East Africa required the new state to undertake the active recruitment of settlers in order to administer and colonize these territories. These developments served to create a new avenue of state-sanctioned German migration and an increasing sense of German identity among those leaving Germany. Overall, the existing patterns of migration continued into the first decade of the twentieth century when they were brought to a sudden halt by the outbreak of the First World War that similarly triggered a flood of anti-German sentiment in many of the countries that had thus far been popular destinations for German migrants. Countries such as the United States of America, Australia and South Africa all took decisions to intern German citizens and witnessed anti-German riots and protests that had a marked impact on those expatriate communities.²⁸ In the United States of America, the effect of anti-German sentiments was so great that it sparked a trend of “de-Germanizing” in many areas in which German families would alter the spelling of their names and/or businesses in order to escape unwanted attention. These actions, which were re-played to some extent twenty years later following the USA's entry into the Second World War, had a marked impact on the assimilation of German communities into general American society.²⁹

German Immigration to Southern Africa

The history of German immigration in southern Africa is certainly not as intensive as that which occurred in America, however the subcontinent nonetheless witnessed a steady

²⁶ J. Hermand & J. Steakley, *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland. The German Sense of Belonging*, 1996, p. 47.

²⁷ D. Orlow, *A History of Modern Germany. 1871 to Present*, 1995, p. 46.

²⁸ L. W. F. Grundlingh, “n Aspek van Blanke Suid-Afrikaanse Groepsverhoudinge tydens die Eerste Wereldoorlog: Anti-Duiste Opstande, Mei 1915”, *South African Historical Journal* 12, 1980, p. 65.

²⁹ C. Coburn, *Life at Four Corners. Religion, Gender, and Education in a German Lutheran Community, 1868-1945*. 1992, pp. 136-140.

influx of German-speaking immigrants that began with the very first European settlement in 1652.³⁰ This outpost of the VOC (Dutch East India Company) at the Cape of Good Hope, which served as a refreshment station for Dutch ships on their arduous journey to and from Asia, is well researched in South African historiography. From these sources there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the number of Germans at the Cape at the end of the seventeenth century, comprised a little over 30% of the population. Although it has long been suggested that most of this number had been drawn from the linguistically homogenous north-western German states bordering on the Netherlands, evidence points to the fact that German employees in the VOC had come from every corner of German lands in Europe.³¹ This predisposition towards the employment of Germans within the VOC was reinforced in the official policy of the company in 1657 that stated that only Dutch 'burghers' and German subjects could be granted employment.³²

Over the course of the eighteenth century German individuals continued to find ready employment in the VOC where they were frequently enlisted as soldiers for terms of service at the Cape. Given the social upheaval and general poverty that plagued Germany over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the East India Company continued to benefit from a ready supply of German recruits who in turn, were only too grateful to be offered opportunities that might better their position in life.³³ Upon the completion of their contracts these individuals often chose to remain in the Cape as "free burghers" (free citizens) where they were quickly assimilated into the general life of the settlement. This pattern of assimilation is discussed in the book *Deutsche Kultur am Kap* where author Kurt Bauch concludes that, "all these Germans came as individuals. They did not come in a group, and they did not form a group. They did not come fired with any religious or political idea...(and) so no community feeling could grow up among them."³⁴

While this statement certainly holds true for the majority of immigrants of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the aspect of religious confession presents possibly the most powerful insight into the sense of identity of the German immigrants of that era. This is largely evident in the response to the lack of religious freedom that was enforced at the

³⁰ H. Grünewald, "Auf, auf, ihr Brüder" *Deutsche in Südafrika*, 1992, p. 11.

³¹ G. C. de Wet, Die Duitsers aan die Kaap in 1692, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 16.

³² H. Pfannkuch, Warum verließen sie die Heimat?, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 10.

³³ M. Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 1990, p. 69.

³⁴ K. Bauch & A. Mertens, *Deutsche Kultur am Kap*, 1964, pp. 16-17.

Cape by the Dutch authorities who from the outset of the colony, only allowed the (Dutch) State Reformed Church to cater to the spiritual needs of the settlement.³⁵ It is evident from sources that despite the VOC's blanket moratorium on other denominations, there was nevertheless, a strong Lutheran³⁶ community living at the Cape, which relied on passing Lutheran missionaries to the East for occasional church services and the provision of Holy Communion in particular.³⁷ When, after numerous petitions to the Dutch authorities, Lutheranism was officially allowed in 1779, the congregation, that was listed in the annals of the newly built Lutheran church in Strand Street, recorded 441 parishioners, of whom it is indicated that 400 were of German origin. When this is seen against the overall population of the Cape in that year, which numbered a total of 1660 people, it arguably provides the best indication of the measure of German identity that existed within the colony then.³⁸ In a time before the existence of modern Germany, it certainly holds true that various other markers of identity, such as religious confession and language, often offer the best clues regarding the nature of the identity of German immigrants. By the mid nineteenth century, the role of Lutheranism in particular became increasingly relevant in the identity of German settlements throughout Southern Africa and as such, will be discussed at greater length in relation to the history of German missionaries in the subcontinent.³⁹

With the steady growth of the Cape Colony, particularly after its official incorporation into the British Empire in 1814, German immigration similarly began to expand into the frontier areas of the Eastern Cape and Natal. The general settlement of these areas was moreover encouraged by the British government that had decided to embark upon a programme of "assisted immigration" in an effort both to ameliorate the problems of poverty in Britain at that time as well as to populate its colonies with British subjects.⁴⁰ This venture, which saw approximately 4000 British settlers arriving in the turmoil-ridden Eastern Cape frontier in 1820, equally hoped to consolidate the fragile interactions that had grown out of the rapid encroachment of the Cape's settlers and Xhosa upon each

³⁵ F. Smuts (ed.), *Stellenbosch Three Centuries*, 1979, p. 355.

³⁶ The role of Lutheranism as a Christian confession that was primarily prevalent to northern Germany and therefore, strongly linked to the fundamental identity of that region, is discussed at greater length in Chapter 5.

³⁷ W. H. C. Hellberg, *Towards Religious Freedom*, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 22.

³⁸ K. Bauch & A. Mertens, *Deutsche Kultur am Kap*, 1964, p. 17.

³⁹ H. Voges, *Vision: Global Congregation. The Task in Southern Africa*. 2000. pp. 22-23.

⁴⁰ R. Elphick & H. Giliomee (ed.), *The Shaping of South African Society 1652-1840*, 1989. pp. 472-474.

other.⁴¹ Although the outcome of this tension eventually swung in favour of the European colonists, it was not before the region had witnessed no less than nine Frontier Wars that collectively spanned a century from 1780 and 1878.⁴²

It was during this period of conflict along the Frontier that the Eastern Cape witnessed the arrival of its first substantial numbers of German immigrants, in the form of the British – German Legion, who had been recruited to assist in Britain’s Crimean War of 1853-1856.⁴³ However, the Crimean War ended before the unit could depart for the Crimea and the British government was faced with finding an alternate use for these men, especially since most had been recruited from German states that had pledged their neutrality towards the conflict, and would therefore not have been able to return to their homes. The solution came in the proposal to settle the soldiers on the Eastern Cape Frontier as “military settlers” in which they would be eligible for military duty for seven years from the date of their arrival, should this be required within the colony. While most of the Legion’s 8000 soldiers preferred stations such as India or America, a little over 2000 men (accompanied by over 500 women and children) accepted the government’s proposal and duly arrived at the Eastern Cape frontier in 1857.⁴⁴ This initial settlement of German soldiers was followed by the further arrival of German civilian settler groups in 1858, which the British government had recruited in an attempt to create a socially stable and ultimately more productive environment than that of the largely single and unmarried soldiers. The result of this concentrated influx of German colonists into relatively isolated regions of the frontier lent itself to the establishment and maintenance of a largely German-speaking community with place names such as Berlin, Potsdam, Hamburg and Stutterheim, all bearing testimony to the German character of the region.⁴⁵

The success of the German settlements on the Eastern Cape frontier led to the decision by the British government to extend the policy of assisted German immigration into the Cape Flats, on the outskirts of Cape Town. This barren landscape, that was prone to roving sand dunes in summer and flooding in winter, was deemed to be too valuable in its

⁴¹ R. Davenport & C. Saunders, *South Africa. A Modern History*, 2000, pp. 44-46.

⁴² South African History Online, “The Xhosa Frontier Wars 1779-1879”, <<http://www.sahistory.org.za/south-africa-1652-1806/frontier-or-xhosa-wars-1779-1879>>, Access 2011-9-24.

⁴³ R. Grüner, Die Kaffrariadeutschen, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 134.

⁴⁴ H. Grünewald, “Auf, auf, ihr Brüder” *Deutsche in Südafrika*, 1992, pp. 70-72.

⁴⁵ R. Grüner, Die Kaffrariadeutschen, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 134.; H. Grünewald, “Auf, auf, ihr Brüder” *Deutsche in Südafrika*, 1992, p. 72.

proximity to Cape Town to be left uncultivated.⁴⁶ As a result, two groups of German immigrants were recruited from the Lüneburger Heide region in northern Germany between 1877 and 1883 and settled in the area of the Cape Flats that later became known as Philippi. Over time, the Philippi community not only managed successfully to cultivate the Cape Flats but also maintained a strong German identity through the establishment of a German school and church.⁴⁷ In this vein, one visitor to the settlement remarked that “one does not at all get an African impression of the Flats” but rather that it “feels as if you suddenly find yourself in a German village.”⁴⁸ Although the Colonial Government did not continue pursuing the practice of assisted German immigration beyond those at Philippi, it certainly did not dissuade other German groups from arriving in the South African colonies of their own accord. Of these groups who made their own way to settle in South Africa and who similarly maintained strong ties to their German heritage was that of the community of New Germany in the Natal Colony.

The history of the New Germany settlement, situated on the outskirts of Durban, is centered around an enterprising Bavarian named Jonas Bergtheil who, having acquired agricultural land in the colony in 1847, launched an enterprise to grow and export cotton. Soon realizing that in order for the venture to be successful he would require more settlers, Bergtheil applied and was granted permission to recruit German immigrants to settle and establish farms in the colony. To this effect 115 people from the area surrounding the north German city of Bremen agreed to join the venture and arrived in Durban in 1848. Although Bergtheil’s cotton enterprise eventually failed, the German settlement not only endured but also played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society (HMS) in South Africa that directly influenced many of the German settlements that were to follow in the country’s interior.⁴⁹

The history of German missionaries in Southern Africa is intricately linked to the immigration and establishment of German communities throughout this region.⁵⁰ Indeed, when commenting on the role of missionaries in the Cape Colony by the mid nineteenth

⁴⁶ L. Rabe, *‘Bete und Arbeite’ The Philippi Germans and their story*, 2010, p. i, 29.

⁴⁷ L. Rabe, *‘Bete und Arbeite’ The Philippi Germans and their story*, 2010, pp. i, 50, 59, 83.

⁴⁸ L. Rabe, *‘Bete und Arbeite’ The Philippi Germans and their story*, 2010, p. i, 83.

⁴⁹ A. Peters, *The Bergtheil Settlers 1847/48. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, pp. 119-120.; A. Leuschke, *The Hermannsburg Mission Society in Natal and Zululand, Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 56.

⁵⁰ W. H. C. Hellberg, *Towards Religious Freedom, Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 22.

century, author Robert Ross states that at that time, the Cape was “probably the most missionised area in the world”.⁵¹ The list of German mission societies that established themselves in the area that is now South Africa is extensive. The first to do so were the Moravian missionaries who began work in the Cape Colony at the famous *Genadendal* mission station in 1737.⁵² They were followed by the Rhenish, Berlin and Hermannsburg mission societies who established themselves in various regions across the country, both within the established settlements and beyond the borders of the frontier. Of these, it is the HMS that is of direct interest to this dissertation and that was ultimately responsible for the largest German settlements in the Natal and Transvaal regions, including the settlement of Kroondal.⁵³

The HMS was the product of a nineteenth-century Christian evangelical movement that was led by pastor Ludwig (popularly known as Louis)⁵⁴ Harms in the obscure town of Hermannsburg in the then Kingdom of Hanover. After a difficult beginning in which Harms’s initial attempts to link his seminary to the Lutheran State Church were denied, he proceeded undeterred in developing his personal vision of Lutheran evangelism that was centred on the recruitment of uneducated men to be trained as missionaries.⁵⁵ These were enrolled in a rigorous programme that emphasized physical labour as much as theological knowledge and so doing, realized Harms’ desire to produce a *Bauernmission* or farmer/peasant mission. The roots of this principle lay in Harms’s firm belief that the practical demonstration of the Christian faith was as important as the spoken sermon.⁵⁶ As such, Harms’s “heathen mission” (being predominantly focused on Africa) revolved around the premise that people outside Christendom (and as such heathens) were people without culture. Therefore, he concluded that the farmers of lower Saxony were the ideal people to missionize the African “heathens” since they themselves had been rescued from a similar barbaric heritage through the Christianity of the Roman Empire. In this Harms was drawing upon the Roman historian Tacitus’s largely unfavourable description of the Germanic

⁵¹ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, 2002, p. 36.

⁵² H. von Delft, Der Anteil von Kirche und Mission an der deutschen Einwanderung, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 30.

⁵³ L. Zöllner, Die Rynse Sendelinge, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 48.; H. von Delft, Der Anteil von Kirche und Mission an der deutschen Einwanderung, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 30.

⁵⁴ E. Lüdemann, *Ludwig Harms. Grüße alle meine Kinder, die weißen und die schwarzen... Briefe eines Missionsdirektors nach Südafrika 1861-1865*. 1998. p. 31.

⁵⁵ H. Harms, *Concern for the Unreached. Life and work of Louis Harms, founder of the Hermannsburg Mission*. 1999. pp. 23-24.

⁵⁶ F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsbürger Mission im Spannungsfeld der kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*, 1986, p. 30.

tribes in the first century AD. Consequently Harms attributed virtually the entire German cultural heritage to the advent of Christianity and considered the ancient German forebears as wholly similar to the un-evangelized Africans he aimed to reach. From this assertion, Harms developed a policy whereby German colonists were dispatched together with the missionaries in order to provide both logistical support to the mission as well as to present a practical example of Christian culture and lifestyle to these communities.⁵⁷

Within four years of its inception in 1849, the Hermannsburg Mission was able to embark eight ordained missionaries and eight supporting colonists on the Society's purpose built ship, the *Candaze*⁵⁸, bound for East Africa. The objective was to reach the Oromo people of Ethiopia but upon reaching Mombasa they were refused the right to proceed by the region's Islamic authorities who did not want Christian influence in their territory.⁵⁹ Returning to Durban, which had been their last port of call on their journey to East Africa, the missionaries were persuaded by the local German community (of Bergtheil Germans) to pursue their calling among the Zulu nation instead. As a result the missionaries undertook to buy a farm on the border of Zululand where they erected a mission station, aptly named New Hermannsburg. The initial years in Natal were difficult but after their first year of settlement the group was able to consecrate a large Mission House that had been built after the design of the farmhouses found in their native region of northern Germany.⁶⁰

As with so many groups of German immigrants in the later nineteenth century, the Hermannsburg missionaries worked hard to retain their cultural identity as Germans. In this respect, the Hermannsburgers had had a potent combination of religious conviction and ethnic awareness impressed upon them before leaving Germany. For Harms, the cultural preservation of the mission was tied to the preservation of the settlers ethnicity and German identity and they were under strict instruction not to marry outside of the German community. To this effect Harms himself chose "suitable" brides in Germany for those missionaries and colonists who were unmarried, but only after the mission had been suitably established for the women to be allowed to join them in Natal. The perspective with which the HMS viewed these matters is expressed in the following quoted extract

⁵⁷ F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsbürger Mission im Spannungsfeld der kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*, 1986, pp. 30-31.

⁵⁸ Candaze was named after the Ethiopian Queen mentioned in the New Testament book of Acts 8:27.

⁵⁹ H. Harms, *Concern for the Unreached. Life and work of Louis Harms, founder of the Hermannsburg Mission*. 1999. p. 41.

⁶⁰ A. Leuschke, The Hermannsburg Mission Society in Natal and Zululand, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 56.

from the portrayal of the life of Hermannsburg missionary Wilhelm Behrens upon his departure from Germany in 1857:

In his sermon to the departing missionaries, he (Theodor Harms⁶¹) reminded them to approach their duties as Lutherans, Germans and Hermannsburgers. They were to carry the Lutheran confession and the pure word of God to the heathens. They were to treasure and maintain the German language and customs, and as Hermannsburgers, they were to be ready to tackle each task ahead of them with humility so that they would bear testimony to their faith, not only through their words but also through their actions.⁶² (Own translation)

It was within this conviction of a simultaneous cultural and spiritual mission that the Hermannsburg missionaries and settlers approached their relocation to South Africa and across the world, with Hermannsburg missionaries eventually represented in countries as far afield as Brazil, Ethiopia, Australia and New Zealand.⁶³

In 1857, three years after they had first arrived in Natal, the HMS received an invitation from the newly established Transvaal Republic asking whether they would be prepared to take up work among the Tswana people of the western Transvaal as well as into the Bechuanaland frontier. The impetus to this invitation had purportedly come from the Batswana chieftain Sechele (Setshele) of the Kwena, who had requested a replacement for the renowned English missionary, David Livingstone, to resume work among his people.⁶⁴ Livingstone had lived among the Bakwena people from 1845 till 1852, until the settlement was sacked by a Commando from the Transvaal Republic in 1852.⁶⁵ In the aftermath of this conflict, and amidst the growing tensions that were developing between the Transvaal Republic and Great Britain, the Transvaal became increasingly suspicious of the London Missionary Society's work among the Batswana. These developments resulted in the Republic's then president Marthinus Pretorius extending an invitation to the ostensibly more "trustworthy" German missionaries to take up work among the Batswana

⁶¹ Theodor Harms worked along with his brother, Ludwig Harms in founding the Hermannsburg Mission Society and later became the Society's Director after Ludwig's death 1865.

⁶² J. Brammer, *Was der alte Missionshof erzählt. Ein Lebensbild des Betschuanenmissionars Wilhem Behrens*, 1950, p. 14.

⁶³ Lüdemann, E. A (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburg Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. p. 9-20.

⁶⁴ R. Davenport & C. Saunders, *South Africa. A Modern History*, 2000, p. 189.

⁶⁵ Dictionary of African Christian Biography, "Awakening the Western World to Africa", <http://www.dacb.org/stories/southafrica/legacy_livingstone.html>, Access 2011-9-25.

and thereby reduce the influence of the London Missionary Society's work along its western frontier.⁶⁶ Although the Hermannsburg missionaries responded to the request and began work among both the Bechuanaland and Transvaal Tswana populations by mid 1857, the Society's tenure in Bechuanaland was short lived and by 1864 missionary work in the territory had once again been ceded to the London Mission Society.⁶⁷

Despite the disappointment that the Hermannsburg missionaries experienced following the events in Bechuanaland, the success of their work among the Tswana population within the Transvaal quickly grew as the increasingly marginalized African population began to rely on missionaries for protection. Of the many functions that the missionaries fulfilled in this period was the procurement of land for the disenfranchised tribes who were otherwise subject to indentured labour, in return for "squatting" on the farmer's land.⁶⁸

This was similarly the case on the farm Kronendal that had been procured in trust by the Hermannsburg missionary Christian Müller in 1878 to provide the Baphalane tribe, with whom he was stationed, with an alternative settlement to their current, malaria-ridden location at Ramakokstad, some one hundred kilometres north of Rustenburg.⁶⁹ However, due the inability of the resettled Baphalane to be able to service the necessary payments on the property, along with the government's opposition to the resettlement, citing legislation that limited the number of African families residing on white farms, the venture eventually failed. This led to the majority of the tribe returning to Ramakokstad whereupon pastor Müller, together with a number of other Hermannsburg missionaries and German settlers, decided to buy the farm from the Baphalane with the intention of establishing a German community there. This duly occurred and in 1889, upon paying the sum of £2600, the new community received the deeds to the farm, which they renamed Kroondal.⁷⁰

The settlement of Kroondal, which is situated approximately eight kilometres east of Rustenburg, formed part of the dense mission field that stretched laterally through the

⁶⁶ F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsburger Mission im Spannungsfeld der kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*, 1986, p. 42.; V. Carruthers, *The Magaliesberg*, 2000, p. 277

⁶⁷ H. Pape, Hermannsburg Missionarbeit in Transvaal, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 60.; J. S. Bergh (ed.), *Geskiedenis Atlas van Suid-Afrika*, 1999, p. 153-155.

⁶⁸ J. S. Bergh & Fred Morton, "To make them serve..." *The 1871 Transvaal Commission on African Labour*, 2003, p. 12.

⁶⁹ L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*, 1992, p. 235.

⁷⁰ H. & I. Behrens, *Die Siedlung Kroondal – 100 Jahre 1889-1989. Festschrift zur Jubiläumsfeier am 4. November 1989*, p 7.

western Transvaal and into Bechuanaland.⁷¹ It is within the context of this landscape and Kroondal's virtually exclusive composition of Hermannsburg Germans and missionaries that the community fostered the distinct German-Lutheran identity that has characterized it from the earliest days of the settlement. Following the purchase of the farm, the Kroondal community wasted little time in sub-dividing the land into eleven sections before beginning the task of transforming what had been a relatively neglected piece of land into a fertile farm.⁷² To this end the settlement was established along the lines of a rural German village with the houses arranged along either sides of a single street. As is the custom that stems from the European feudal tradition, each house was also provided with an additional strip of "ploughing" land that lay directly behind it, while the primary farmland (that had been divided equally) lay on the outskirts of the town.⁷³ Over the course of the next ten years the settlement readily established itself with the additions of a church and water-mill, while the community's schooling took place in a sturdy hut until a school building could be erected in 1897.⁷⁴

It was within this setting that Kroondal entered into the events of the Anglo-Boer War (ABW) between 1899 and 1902 which, by the end of hostilities, saw the settlement deserted and largely in ruins, with its inhabitants scattered; these having been either interned and imprisoned by the British authorities or alternatively living in urban communities such as Pretoria. For the Kroondalers, their participation in the war, in which virtually every man reported for duty among the Boer commandos, proved to be an important crucible in developing their sense of belonging to their adopted land.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the community remained steadfastly committed to the retention of their German heritage in an era that was characterized by a sense of self-determination and national pride. The words of Ludwig Harms and the Mission's ethos of German Lutheranism were still embedded in the hearts and minds of this first generation of expatriates.

As the community moved out of the devastation of the ABW and into the twentieth century they were met by the changing political landscape of British influence that culminated in

⁷¹ J. S. Bergh (ed.), *Geskiedenis Atlas van Suid-Afrika. Die Vier Noordelike Provinsies*. 1999, p. 57.

⁷² H. & I. Behrens, *Die Siedlung Kroondal – 100 Jahre 1889-1989. Festschrift zur Jubiläumsfeier am 4. November 1989*, p 7.

⁷³ R. Otto, *Honderd Jaar Kroondal, Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 131.

⁷⁴ Kroondal Community Archive, *The Old Lutheran Church at Kroondal* (commemorative booklet), p. 11,

⁷⁵ L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*, 1992, pp. 237-249.

the formation of the Union of South African in 1910, under the reconciliatory government of the Boer generals Louis Botha and Jan Smuts. As a dominion of the British Empire, South Africa's internal politics remained relatively uneasy with the troubled wounds of the recent conflict still fresh in the minds of many in the population.⁷⁶ One of the areas that was most strongly opposed to the new dispensation was indeed that of the western Transvaal, which gave birth to a small Afrikaner rebellion following South Africa's entry into the First World War as a British ally. Although the rebellion was quickly checked, this episode illustrates the strength of anti-British sentiment that had remained within many areas of the Union.⁷⁷ This was in stark contrast to other areas such as the predominantly English city of Johannesburg, a mere 100 kilometres to the south, where the events of the First World War sparked anti-German riots.⁷⁸ The result was that many German-speaking South Africans who were living in primarily English areas, made concerted efforts to demonstrate their support for the British cause, mostly through publishing letters in newspapers but also in other actions such as ceasing to speak the German language.⁷⁹

This phenomenon of anti-German sentiment during both the First and Second World Wars was certainly not limited to South Africa, as was discussed on page ten of this Introduction. However, it is within the unique context of South Africa's political divisions, between the pro-British and predominantly English -speaking population and the largely Afrikaans and staunchly anti-British community, that the settlement of Kroondal escaped much of the pressure to assimilate. In this respect, many German South African communities such as those of Stutterheim in the Eastern Cape did not manage to maintain their cultural unity over the course of the two World Wars.⁸⁰ In the midst of these upheavals that characterized so much of the first half of the twentieth century, the Kroondal community worked hard to retain strong ties to its German heritage, not least through the practice of the German language and the centrality of the Lutheran Church. Yet, within these cultural boundaries, the questions that remain are, "Was it really German? And if so, what made it German?" From these two questions, with which this introduction first began, this

⁷⁶ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, 2002, p. 84.

⁷⁷ R. Davenport & C. Saunders, *South Africa. A Modern History*, 2000, pp. 283-285.

⁷⁸ The Anti-German Riots that occurred in May 1915 were specifically triggered by the torpedoing of the British civilian liner 'Lusitania' but were precipitated by the general build up emotions and dissatisfaction with the Union's treatment of enemy nationals.

⁷⁹ L. W. F. Grundlingh, "n Aspek van Blanke Suid-Afrikaanse Groepsverhoudinge tydens die Eerste Wereldoorlog: Anti-Duiste Opstande, Mei 1915", *South African Historical Journal* 12, 1980, p. 65.

⁸⁰ R. Grüner, Die Kaffrariadeutschen, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 137.

dissertation will proceed to examine the identity of the Kroondal community in the following chapters:

Chapter 2, Literature Review

This chapter investigates the available source material on German immigration, identity and the settlement of around the world and in South Africa in particular.

Chapter 3, *Heimat and Deutschtum*,

Chapter 3 addresses the question of identity in historical studies along with the specific notions of German identity that are found in the descriptors words *Heimat* and *Deutschtum*.

Chapter 4, *Demut und Treue*,

Chapter 4 summarizes the history and identity of the Hermannsburg Mission Society in its role as the foundational identity of the Kroondal community.

Chapter 5, *Das Heimatrecht zu Erwerben* / “Earning the right to belong”,

This chapter discusses the formative history of the Kroondal settlement in which its inhabitants came to associate with the landscape of a new *Heimat* and encompasses the period from the settlement’s founding in 1889 until the immediate aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War.

Chapter 6, *Gedenke das due in Deustcher bist!* / Remember that you are a German!

The last chapter concerns itself with Kroondal’s response to the rise of German nationalism over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and its culmination in the Second World War.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

It might well be argued that the underlying motive behind all historical investigation is humanity's desire to explore, and indeed, possibly even formulate his/her own identity. It is therefore not surprising that the study of cultural (group) identity has become an increasingly popular field of historical research. One of the aspects in this sphere is the analysis of immigrant communities and the nature of their response to living in a foreign culture. It is within this context that the feature of German (im)migration is by no means a unique phenomenon among the world's disparate communities, and yet it has produced sufficient literature to indicate a general interest in what has been termed "the German Diaspora".¹

Secondary Source Material

Most of the existing literature that investigates or chronicles the settlement of German immigrants is found in the form of local historical writing that is typically not available in international academic collections. Much of this literature can be accessed, however, through using Internet sources, which will suffice for the scope of this study. For example, information regarding the immigration of Germans to the USA and Australia can be found on sites such as the *German-American Heritage Foundation* and *German-Australia*.² These are just two of a substantial number of independent and associated organizations that are prevalent throughout the world, including South Africa, usually from regions that have had significant levels of German immigration.

Despite the difficulty in accessing such local histories from around the globe, one can obtain information from a number of key academic publications regarding the patterns of German immigration and settlement. One such text is a collection of essays titled *European Expansion and Migration*, edited by P. C. Emmer and M. Mörner. The contribution in this book by K. J. Bade called, "German Transatlantic Emigration in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries", undertakes a fairly extensive appraisal of German

¹ K. O' Donnell, R. Bridenthal, & N. Reagin (ed.), *The Heimat Abroad. The Boundaries of Germanness*. Michigan. 2005. p. 17.

² German American Heritage Foundation. n.d. <<http://www.ugac.org/>> 2008-02-12; GERMAN-AUSTRALIA. n.d. <<http://www.germanaustralia.com/>> 2008-02-12.

intercontinental immigration, particularly to the USA. Scrutiny of Bade's referencing reveals that most of his research materials were garnered from German academia with the exception of a few American sources.³ Despite the fact that Bade's investigation is essentially a statistical and socio-economic evaluation of German immigration to the USA, he does include four interesting pages wherein he comments upon the issues of immigrant identity and assimilation.⁴ Comparable texts to this include *Migration, Migration History, History* edited by J. & L. Lucassen and *The British World – Diaspora, Culture and Identity* with editors C. Bridge and K Fedorowich. Although these two texts pay no specific attention to German migration, their research on immigrant identity and colonial Diaspora in particular do provide this study with valuable insights.⁵

Another important source that once again focuses upon immigration to the USA, is *Immigrant America* edited by Timothy Walch. Among the contributions to Walch's investigation into the US's multi-cultural origins is that of L. J. Rippley with a chapter *The Ethnic Frontier: Rural Germans and the Settlement of America*. Rippley argues the importance of understanding the character of America's rural German settlements by examining the life and the identity of the immigrants before they left Germany. Rippley's proposition is that German arrivals in the 'New World' primarily sought a continuation of their previous lifestyles, thereby predisposing them to settle within the same ethnic and social units that they had belonged to prior to their exodus.⁶ In the light of this assumption it is also important to consider broader histories such as *The German Empire 1871-1918* by H. Wehler and *A History of Germany 1815-1985* by D. Orlow which provide general but important clues in understanding the motives behind German migration.⁷

A similar investigation to that of Rippley, which analyses the characteristics of immigrant settlement, can be found in the opening two chapters of the book, *The Age of Migration* by S. Castles and M. J. Miller. In the first of these two sections the authors discuss the migratory process along with the factors that lead to the establishment of ethnic minorities

³ Emmer & Mörner (ed.), *European Expansion and Migration*. pp. 121-155.

⁴ Emmer & Mörner (ed.), *European Expansion and Migration*. pp. 147-151.

⁵ Bridge & Fedorowich (ed.), *The British World - Diaspora, Culture and Identity*. pp. 17, 112, 114; J. & L. Lucassen (ed.), *Migration, Migration History, History*. Bern. 2005. pp. 151, 271.

⁶ T. Walch (ed.), *Immigrant America – European Ethnicity in the US*. New York. 1994. pp. 189-209.

⁷ H. Wehler, *The German Empire 1871-1918*. Lillington; D. Orlow., *A History of Modern Germany, 1871-present*. New Jersey.

within the host countries.⁸ This chapter is followed by “International Migration before 1945”, which surveys global migratory trends during the era of Europe’s colonialism together with the “labour migrations” that occurred during the industrial revolution. Despite proving to be fairly theoretical and at times lacking depth regarding specific studies on individual societies, *The Age of Migration* does offer a general background to the modern period of intercontinental human movements.⁹

Among the few available sources that specifically address the nature of German immigrant identity are *The Heimat Abroad*, edited by K. O’Donnell, R. Bridenthal and N. Reagin and *Creating Germans Abroad* by author D. J. Walther.¹⁰ These in turn are related to other works on German identity that, while not investigating immigrant communities, do research on topics pertaining to the general German character, often referred to as “Germanness”. Examples of these are *Heimat – A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland* authored by P. Blicke and *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland – The German Sense of Belonging*, edited by J. Hermand and J. Steakley.¹¹

The common thread that links all of these texts is their analysis of the term “Heimat” and how it pervades virtually all of the various forms of German identity. Loosely translated the word “Heimat” is often said to mean “home, homeland or native region” but as is suggested by Blicke, its deeper meaning extends to “identity, gender, nature, and (idealized) innocence”.¹² In the end, it is in examining the multiplicity of the concept of Heimat and the position that it occupies in German communities, that these authors demonstrate its usefulness in analyzing the identity of German society.¹³

In the study *Creating Germans Abroad*, Walther undertakes an intriguing look at the history of German South West Africa and the combination of circumstance and ideology

⁸ S. Castles & M. J. Miller, *The Age of Migration – International Population Movements in the Modern World*. New York. pp. 18-42.

⁹ Castles & Miller, *The Age of Migration*. pp. 43-64.

¹⁰ O’ Donnell, Bridenthal, & Reagin (ed.), *The Heimat Abroad*; Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad – cultural policies and national identity in Namibia*.

¹¹ P. Blicke, *Heimat – A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. New York; J. Hermand & J. Steakley, *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland – The German Sense of Belonging*. New York. 1996.

¹² Blicke, *Heimat – A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. pp. i, ix-x.

¹³ Hermand & Steakley, *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland*. pp. viii, 26.

that shaped the identity of its settlers. Divided into two parts, the book first chronicles the German community in its role as the ruling class up until the First World War and thereafter as a struggling minority, fighting to maintain its cultural character. The prevailing issue within both eras is that of “Deutschtum” or “Germanness” and how German South West Africa was careful to cultivate the ideal of a pre-industrial society in which the family unit, diligence and national pride lay at the core. The study concludes with a specific look at the evolution of the community’s identity in the chapter, *From Southwestern Germans to German Südwest*, which in particular brings to the fore the importance of the concept of “Heimat”. Walther argues that it is largely this connection to the adopted region, as also a more conservative understanding of “Deutschtum”, which ultimately defines the identity of German speakers within what is now Namibia.¹⁴

Another important source that fulfills a comparable role to that of *Creating Germans Abroad* is the collection of essays found in *The Heimat Abroad*, edited by O’Donnell, Bridenthal and Reagin. Due to its various contributors, the book presents a wide range of research results that combine to create a relatively broad and varied perspective on the nature of German migration, assimilation and non-assimilation throughout the world. Of particular relevance to this study are, amongst others, essays by H. Sargent, K. O’Donnell, J. Buchenau and T. Lekan whose topics range from questions of Diaspora to case studies of German immigration to Mexico and the different manifestations of “Heimat” both within and outside of Germany.¹⁵ The relevance to this study of both *The Heimat Abroad* and *Creating Germans Abroad* lies in the nature of their investigations into the ethnic identity of German immigrants in various localities around the world. As references, these texts play significant roles in providing guidance to comparable investigations of South Africa’s German communities, particularly in unraveling their individual identities.

One source that stands out from amongst those that have already been mentioned in this literature survey is the work of author, Carol Coburn, on the German Lutheran community at Block Corners in the mid-western United States of America, titled *Life at Four Corners. Religion, Gender and Education in a German-Lutheran Community 1868-1945*.¹⁶ As the

¹⁴ Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad*. pp. vii-viii, 4-5, 188-192.

¹⁵ O’Donnell, Bridenthal & Reagin (ed.), *The Heimat Abroad*; Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad*. pp. 15, 40, 85, 141.

¹⁶ C. Coburn, *Life at Four Corners. Religions, Gender and Education in a German-Lutheran Community 1868-1945*. 1992. p. 1.

title (in part) suggests, Coburn directs her focus towards the role that religion, gender and ethnicity have played in developing the identity of “the Block” Community, while simultaneously exploring the manner in which the Block’s various institutions combined to ensure the continuation of this identity. This “transmission of values, beliefs and culture across (the) generations” ultimately represents the book’s central focus, which Coburn equates to “education in its broadest sense”. Within this context, *Life at Four Corners* proceeds to investigate those aspects of the Block community that were principally responsible for the education of its members and which Coburn lists as the *Church*, the *School*, the *Family* and *The Outside World*.¹⁷

The particular value that Coburn’s case study of the Block community has to this dissertation, is not only due to its appraisal of German immigrant identity but also in the surprising similarities that exist between the Block community and the community of Kroondal, upon which this study is based. In an extraordinary coincidence, most of the immigrants at Block in the USA, as with those of Kroondal in South Africa, originated from the Hannover region of north-western Germany and the majority of individuals from both communities immigrated between the mid to the end of the nineteenth century. Although the Block community was not closely associated with the work of a missionary society, as was that of Kroondal to the Hermannsburg Mission, it was nevertheless strongly centered upon the Lutheran doctrine and in this respect, further mirrors the centrality of the Christian faith in the community of Kroondal.¹⁸ As a result, *Life at Four Corners* offers a unique mode of comparative insight with which to juxtapose the varying aspects of South Africa’s rural German community and most particularly, the manner in which it offers a deepened perspective of the identity of the Kroondal Germans.

The limited degree that German settlement in South Africa has been featured in the country’s general histories is arguably deceptive regarding the level of influence that German immigrants and their descendants have had in its past development. Among the numerous academic and popular texts that set out to chronicle the principal events of South African history, few pay more than a passing comment to the presence of German immigrants. It is, nevertheless, important to begin an appraisal of the literature on South African Germans with an investigation into the country’s general historical material.

¹⁷ Coburn, *Life at Four Corners*. pp. 1-5.

¹⁸ Coburn, *Life at Four Corners*. pp. 9-12.

The voluminous *History of South Africa*, authored by G. M. Theal and first published in 1899, arguably laid out the basic historical pattern that has been most frequently used by other authors in documenting German influx into the country. Commencing with the arrival of the first colonists of the Dutch East Indian Company in 1652, Theal examines the demographic proportions of the early Cape colony and concludes that although the majority of the new arrivals were of German origin, they were rapidly assimilated into the Cape's mainstream Dutch society.¹⁹

Similarly, authors such as T. R. H. Daveport, F. A. van Jaarsveld and H. J. van Aswegen all included comments on the arrival of German individuals in the early days of the Cape colony in their writing of general histories of South Africa. However, among these historians, particular attention to German immigration is only provided with references to the settlement of German farmers on the Eastern Cape frontier in and around 1860. This in turn is supplemented with some mention of German arrivals and settlement in Natal, approximately a decade earlier to those on the Cape frontier.²⁰ Some scholars, among them Theal but also L. Thompson and editors T. Cameron and S. B. Spies, have gone further by drawing limited attention to the role of various German mission societies in the course of the country's development.²¹ Two general South African histories that noticeably omit any reference to German immigration and settlement are the renowned *A History of South Africa – Social and Economic* by C. W. de Kiewiet and *A Concise History of South Africa* by R. Ross.²²

In contrast to the above-mentioned works, many key texts on South Africa's German populations can be found in a variety of published journals. Significantly, most of these

¹⁹ G. M. Theal, *History of South Africa. Vol. IV*. Cape Town. 1964. pp. 351-353.

²⁰ T. R. H. Davenport, *South Africa. A Modern History*. Wiltshire. 2000. 22, 142; C. F. J. Muller, *Vyfhonderd Jaar Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis*. Pretoria. 1968. pp. 200-201, 219; Theal, *History of South Africa. Vol. VII*. pp. 177-178; H. J. van Aswegen, *History of South Africa to 1854*. pp. 77-79, 175; F. A. van Jaarsveld, *From Van Riebeeck to Vorster 1652-1974*. Johannesburg. 1975. pp. 12, 35.

²¹ T. Cameron & S. B. Spies (ed), *A New Illustrated History of South Africa*. Johannesburg. 1992. pp. 64, 72, 88, 175, 265; Theal, *History of South Africa. Vol. V*. p. 229; G. M. THEAL, *History of South Africa. Vol. X*. Cape Town. pp. 295-296.; L. Thompson, *A History of South Africa*. Sandton. 1990. pp. 35, 58.

²² C. W. de Kiewiet, *A History of South Africa: Social and Economic*. London. 1966.; R. A. Ross, *Concise History of South Africa*. Cambridge. 2000.

articles originate from South Africa's German festival year that was held in 1992, in order to commemorate the role and contribution of German immigrants in the development of the country. One such collection stems from the 1992 congress of the South African Society for Cultural History (SASCH), which papers were published as *The Cultural Historical Contributions of the German-Speaking Community in South Africa*.²³ Another important compilation of material can be found in the February 1992 edition of the journal *Lantern*, published by the now defunct Foundation for Education, Science and Technology.²⁴ Although the articles in these two compilations were curtailed, out of editorial necessity, they do provide useful information, particularly in terms of the wide range of topics that they cover regarding South Africa's German speaking population. The publications included themes such as H. Pfannkuch's *Warum verließen sie die Heimat?* (Why did they leave their homeland) and *Die Duisters an die Kaap 1692* by C. G. de Wet, where the early origins of German immigration to South Africa are investigated.²⁵ Other papers detail the work of German individuals and their contributions to the country and vary from fields as diverse as literature, architecture, art, agriculture and music to engineering, horticulture, geography and geology.²⁶

The role of German missionary societies in South Africa receives good coverage in both the SASCH and *Lantern* publications but it is particularly extensive in the latter where all the key representatives of the country's German missions are discussed. Among the authors who contributed papers on South Africa's (SA's) German missiology are clergymen H. von Delft, with a general history on SA's German churches and missions,

²³ South African Society for Cultural History, *The Cultural Historical Contribution of the German-Speaking Community in South Africa*. Pretoria. 1992.

²⁴ *Lantern, Journal of Knowledge and Culture*, Feb. 1992. Pretoria. 1992.

²⁵ H. Pfannkuch, "Warum verliessen sie die Heimat?". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 10-15; G. C. de Wet, "die Duitsers aan die Kaap in 1692". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 16-18.

²⁶ E. Förtsch, "Kartographische und geologische Erschließung". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 98-102; H. F. Hesse, "Duitse Tegnologie en Ontwikkeling in Suid-Afrika". *SASCH Congress, Genadendal – Volume of congress papers, 27-28 August 1992*. pp. 292-306; D. Holm, "The German Contribution to Architecture". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 70-72; R. E. Ottermann, "Duitse Musici en die Plaaslike Musieklewe". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 78-81; W. Peters, "The German Contribution to South Africa: Architecture". *SASCH Congress, Genadendal – Volume of congress papers, 27-28 August 1992*. pp. 113-117; F. A. van Jaarsveld, "Carl Schürmann, Siviele Ingenieur." *Lantern*, February 1992. p. 97; K. von Delft, "Hans Grimm: Duitse Verhaalkuns oor Suider-Afrika". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 88-89; F. Wittenberg, "Johannes Andreas Auge, Gätner am Fuße des Tafelbergs". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 19-21.

and G. Brunner whose field of interest and service lies with the Catholic church.²⁷ Other contributions by scholars include Prof. J. de Villiers, Dr. I. Balie, W. Reith and L. Zöllner that provide informative insights on the Moravian and Rhenish Christian missions in the Cape Colony.²⁸ Work on the largest of the German missions to South Africa, namely the Hermannsburg and Berlin societies is found in the papers by Dr. U.S. Küsel in the SASCH publication and by W. Schellack, A. Leuschke, I. Filter and H. Pape in *Lantern*.²⁹ In total, the number of independent contributions from these two publications numbers sixty eight and therefore, they appropriately represent an important cross section of available research on German immigration, settlement and contribution in South Africa.

When comparing the *Lantern* papers with those published in the SASCH collection, it is notable that those of the latter primarily describe the transfer of knowledge and culture of SA's German speakers to the broader South African community. This differs in part from the approach adopted by the editors of the *Lantern*, whose articles investigate the history and cultural development of German communities in their own right without placing as much emphasis on how these in turn were carried over, while a smaller percentage of articles focus on the material and cultural contribution to SA.

In the book, *Immigrant America*, that was discussed earlier in this chapter, Rippley comments on the character of rural German settlements within America and various aspects that contributed to the formation of their unique identity. Among the traits that the

²⁷ G. Brunner, "Deutsche katholische Einwanderer". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 38-41; H. von Delft, "Der Anteil von Kirche und Mission an der deutschen Einwanderung". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 30-33.

²⁸ I. Balie, "Die Lewe op die Morawiese Sendingstasies van Kaapland 1792-1860". *SASCH Congress, Genadendal – Volume of congress papers, 27-28 August 1992*. pp. 89-112; J. de Villiers, "Werksaamhede van die Morawiese Sendeling J. P. Kohrhammer aan die Kaap 1798-1811". *SASCH Congress, Genadendal – Volume of congress papers, 27-28 August 1992*. pp. 79-88; W. Reith, "Die Neugründung der Missionstation Genadendal 1792." *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 42-47; L. Zöllner, "Die Rynse Sendelinge". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 48-51.

²⁹ I. M. E. Filter, "The Museum in Hermannsburg". *Lantern*, February 1992. p. 59; U. S. Küsel, "Die Kulturele Bydrae van die Hermannsburgse Sendelinge/Setlaars in Suid-Afrika". *SASCH Congress, Genadendal – Volume of congress papers, 27-28 August 1992*. pp. 43-78; A. Leuschke, "The Hermannsburg Mission Society in Natal and Zululand". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 56-58; H. Pape, "Hermannsburger Missionarbeit in Transvaal". *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 60-63; W. Schellack, "Nalatenskap van die Berlynse Sendinggenootskap", *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 52-55.

author highlights as being distinctive to many of these rural German communities, is the general unwillingness to engage in the political activity of the day. According to Rippley, this feature had its origins in a mixture of specific distrust of politics, along with general apathy that was born of the absence of a democratic tradition within Germany.³⁰ Rippley's observations can be applied to the ostensibly similar circumstances in South Africa's German community. Here it was the Afrikaner community that actively asserted itself in South Africa's political sphere, while the unassimilated German speaking communities generally chose to remain encapsulated within the boundaries of their immediate society.

There are however three notable exceptions in the first half of the twentieth century, where Germans in South Africa were inadvertently drawn into the fray. These three events can be neatly divided into the three largest conflicts to affect South Africa's political geometry, namely the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, the First World War and the Second World War. On South Africa's German-speaking community's involvement in each of these three upheavals, historians have notably written the most regarding the rise of National Socialism and the Second World War.³¹

The investigation of the general South African public's positive and negative reactions to the advent of National Socialism in Germany, has not failed to produce a list of authors who have contributed a number of important publications between them regarding this historical period. The fascination with the rise of Nazism and its relevance to South Africa in both its political and social spheres can be traced to the emulation of national socialist ideals within a number of primarily Afrikaans political organizations during the 1930's.³² The notion, that this political inspiration, and the resulting sympathies for Germany during the Second World War, might have played a part in shaping the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, is the predominant focus of most historical research on this subject.

³⁰ T. Walch, (ed.), *Immigrant America – European Ethnicity in the US*. New York. 1994 .pp. 204-205.

³¹ A. Hagemann, "Very Special Relations: The 'Third Reich' and the Union of South Africa, 1933-1939". *South African Historical Journal* 27 (1992); R. Citino, *Germany and the Union of South Africa in the Nazi Period*. New York. 1991.; P. J. Furlong, *Between Crown and Swastika – The Impact of the Radical Right on the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement in the Fascist Era*. Hanover, USA. 1991.; H. Simson, *The Social Origins of Afrikaner Fascism and its Apartheid Policy*. 1900.

³² P. J. Furlong, "Fascism, the Third Reich and Afrikaner Nationalism: An Assessment of the Historiography". *South African Historical Journal* 27 (1992). p. 113; Hagemann, *Very Special Relations*. p. 127.

During the early years of National Party rule in South Africa and its racial Apartheid policy, historical writing on fascism and the degree to which it may have influenced the policies of the National Party's governance, was largely drawn along ideological lines. On the one-side, publications such as B. Bunting's *The Rise of the South African Reich* and H. Simson's Marxist appraisal, *The Social Origins of Afrikaner Fascism and its Apartheid Policy* emphasized the similarities between Apartheid South Africa and Nazi Germany.³³ On the other hand, many Afrikaner academics wrote studies in which they worked to dispel notions of South Africa's nationalistic policies being influenced by fascist origins. Authors in this category include G. C. Visser with *OB: Traitors or Patriots*, G. D. Scholtz's *Die Ontwikkeling van die Politieke Denke van die Afrikaner*, F. J. van Heerden's *Nasionaal-Socialisme as Faktor in die Suid-Afrikaanse Politiek, 1933-1948* and J. C. Moll's piece titled: *Fascisme: die Problematiek van Verklaringsvariante: Fascisme en Suid Afrika*.³⁴

In more recent years, authors A. Hagemann, P. Furlong and R. Citino have all produced historical studies on South Africa's relationship with Germany during the Nazi period. While Hagemann and Citino have primarily directed their research to investigating the political relationship between the German and South African states, Furlong's various publications have mostly focused on the degree of influence that German fascism might have had on South Africa's political landscape. One such study is Furlong's article in the *South African Historical Journal* of 1992 titled "Fascism, the Third Reich and Afrikaner Nationalism: An Assessment of the Historiography" in which he provides an invaluable critique of the available material in this field of research. This historiographical assessment by Furlong can be seen as an important publication in its own right, as it offers useful appraisals of the materials that are available on the subject of German – South African relations during the Nazi era.

Citino's book *Germany and the Union of South Africa in the Nazi Period*, which investigates the political and economic relations between South Africa and Germany in the

³³ P. J. Furlong, "Fascism, the Third Reich and Afrikaner Nationalism: An Assessment of the Historiography". *South African Historical Journal* 27 (1992). p. 112; H. Simson, *The Social Origins of Afrikaner Fascism and its Apartheid Policy*. 1900.

³⁴ P. J. Furlong, "Fascism, the Third Reich and Afrikaner Nationalism: An Assessment of the Historiography". *South African Historical Journal* 27 (1992). pp. 115-116; J. C. Moll, *Fascisme – Die problematiek van verklaringsvariante; Fascisme en Suid-Afrika*. Bloemfontein, 1985.

pre-war Nazi era, is among those discussed by Furlong in his article.³⁵ Here, Furlong berates Citino's work as being "restrictive" in its scope and limited in the extent of its source material. Where Furlong does offer favourable comment on Citino's monograph it is because he considers there to be "simply... no current English-language alternative".³⁶ The German-language alternative to Citino comes in the form of A. Hagemann's *Südafrika und das "Dritte Reich"* which, similarly to *Germany and the Union of South Africa in the Nazi Period*, investigates the bilateral relations between the two countries. Hagemann differs from Citino in his more detailed incorporation of the 1939-1945 war years, as well as the role of Afrikaner Nationalism in the relations between the two countries.³⁷ Despite Furlong judging Hagemann's *Südafrika und das "Dritte Reich"* as being inaccessible to those not willing (or not able) to labour through the "almost impenetrable academic German style", he does concede that it remains a valuable and thorough contribution.³⁸

In contrast to Citino and Hagemann, P. Furlong's book *Between Crown and Swastika* and his doctoral dissertation "National Socialism, the National Party and the radical Right in South Africa, 1934-1948" are both aimed at examining the development and influence of national socialist ideology in South Africa. In this respect, Furlong provides more insight into the position of the South African German-speaking population during the Nazi era than other authors covering this particular field of South African history. Unfortunately, Furlong's principle aim is to examine the national socialist influences in Afrikaner nationalism and he limits his investigation of the German South Africans to one brief chapter.³⁹ Essentially, although Hagemann and Furlong address a topic that frequently includes the German heritage of the Afrikaner community, their field of research does not allow for any detailed analysis of the South African German community *per se*.⁴⁰

³⁵ R. Citino, *Germany and the Union of South Africa in the Nazi Period*. 1991.

³⁶ P. J. Furlong, "Fascism, the Third Reich and Afrikaner Nationalism: An Assessment of the Historiography". *South African Historical Journal* 27 (1992). p. 118.

³⁷ A. Hagemann, *Südafrika und das "Dritte Reich": Rassenpolitische Affinität und machtpolitische Rivalität*. Frankfurt. 1989. pp. 1-3.

³⁸ P. J. Furlong, "Fascism, the Third Reich and Afrikaner Nationalism: An Assessment of the Historiography". *South African Historical Journal* 27 (1992). p. 118.

³⁹ P. J. Furlong, *Between Crown and Swastika – The Impact of the Radical Right on the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement in the Fascist Era*. 1991. pp. 70-74.

⁴⁰ Furlong, *Between Crown and Swastika – The Impact of the Radical Right on the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement in the Fascist Era*. 1991. pp. 70-74; Hagemann, *Südafrika und das "Dritte Reich"*. pp. 80, 205.

Two published, though lesser known sources that provide important information on South Africa's German community during the advent of National Socialist politics in both Germany and South Africa are books emanating from the study of the Christian HMS. The first book, written by F. Hasselhorn and published in 1988 is *Bauernmission in Südafrika*, which undertakes a broad evaluation of the divergent roles and experiences of the Hermannsburg Mission during the most important political events in South African history.⁴¹ The second and more recent publication, dating to 2005, is *Die Hermannsburger Mission und das "Dritte Reich"* and is edited by G. Gremels. Although the essays that make up the latter publication primarily investigate the experiences of the mission society under Nazi rule within Germany, they do discuss the concurrent situations in their missions in Ethiopia and South Africa.⁴²

The importance of including mission and church literature in this survey is primarily due to the close ties that existed between the German settlement of Kroondal and the HMS. Indeed, because many of Kroondal's families are descended from the mission or from settlers who journeyed to South Africa in support of it, this aspect of its heritage has always played an important part in the community's identity.

Although much of the writing pertaining to the Hermannsburg Mission in South Africa is to be introduced later as part of this study's key literature, there are published materials that play an important part as background sources. The first and most comprehensive of these books is a publication by the Mission Society itself entitled *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit* edited by E. Lüdemann. Consisting of eight separate contributions, the book traces the history of the Society from its birth in Germany to the eventual establishment of mission stations throughout the world.⁴³ The related compilation of the Mission's history in South Africa was undertaken by H. Voges and is also available as a separate English translation called *Vision: Global Congregation – The Task in Southern Africa*.⁴⁴ Two other texts that have been published by the Hermannsburg Mission are those written by H. F. Harms and E. Lüdemann: *Concerned for the Unreached – Life and works of Louis Harms* and *Grüße*

⁴¹ F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsburger Mission im Spannungsfeld der Kolonialpolitik 1880-1939*. Göttingen. 1988. pp. 5-7.

⁴² G. Gremels(ed.), *Die Hermannsburger Mission und das "Dritte Reich*. Münster. 2005. pp. 5-9.

⁴³ E. Lüdemann (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre Hermannsburger Mission. und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. Hermannsburg. 2000. pp. 4-21.

⁴⁴ H. Voges, *Vision: Global Congregation – The Task in Southern Africa*. Pretoria. 2000.

alle meine Kinder, die weißen und die schwarzen... - Briefe eines Missionsdirektors nach Südafrika 1861-1865 respectively. While H. F. Harms' study on the life and work of Louis Harms as founder of the Hermannsburg Mission proves a useful background, it is Lüdemann's investigation of the letters written by Louis Harms to South Africa, that hold particular relevance to this study. The importance of these letters primarily lies in how they reveal the notions of identity amongst the Hermannsburg missionaries as they faced the challenges of working within a foreign land.⁴⁵

Among works that provide greater details of South Africa's German Lutheran church and missionaries are *The Centenary of the Synod, 1895-1995* by R. Ottermann and *Hermannsburg Missionare in Südafrika* written by H. Pape. Ottermann's concise history of the Cape's Lutheran congregations features welcome appraisals of discussions within the Synod along with important insights into the region's German community during upheavals such as the First and Second World Wars.⁴⁶ In comparison, Pape's alphabetical documentation of Hermannsburg missionaries to South Africa is no less valuable despite being somewhat restrictive due to the limited biographical information provided for each individual.⁴⁷ Both Ottermann and Pape have other academic contributions regarding German South Africans to their names, including published articles in the 1992 *Lantern*, which were mentioned earlier in this survey.⁴⁸

In comparison to the relative wealth of literature on German South African experiences during the Second World War, the experiences of the same communities during the First World War and Anglo-Boer War are not as easy to come by. Interestingly, most of the existing texts that provide commentary regarding these wars are found in church and mission writing, including those of Hasselhorn, Lüdemann and Ottermann, which have already been mentioned as part of this review.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ E. Lüdemann (ed.), *Grüße alle meine Kinder, die weißen und die schwarzen... - Briefe eines Missionsdirektors nach Südafrika 1861-1865*. Hermannsburg.

⁴⁶ R. E. Ottermann, *The Centenary of the Synod 1895-1995*. Cape Town. 1995. pp. 37-39, 45-47, 49-51.

⁴⁷ H. Pape, *Hermannsburg Missionare in Südafrika*. Pretoria. 1991. pp. v-vii.

⁴⁸ R. E. Ottermann, *Duitse Musici en die Plaaslike Musieklewe*. *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 78-81.; H. Pape, *Hermannsburg Missionarbeit in Transvaal*. *Lantern*, February 1992. pp. 60-63.

⁴⁹ Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika*. pp. 143-145.; Lüdemann, (ed.) *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit*. pp. 260-264.; Ottermann, *The Centenary of the Synod 1895-1995*. pp. 37-39.

One article that requires particular mention is that of L. Grundlingh, published in the *South African Historical Journal* in 1980 and titled ‘*n Aspek van Blanke Suid-Afrikaanse Groepsverhoudinge tydens die Eerste Wereldoorlog: Anti-Duitse Opstande, Mei 1915*. As the title indicates, the article investigates the Anti-German riots of May 1915, which were triggered by the torpedoing and sinking of the passenger ship *Lusitania* by a German U-boat. Due to the fact that Grundlingh primarily bases his research on newspaper articles and documents in the government archives, the article provides little information on the German communities who were the target of the riots. Instead, the focus of the article remains on the actions of the rioters and the response of the South African government during and immediately after the upheaval.⁵⁰

In comparison to the materials discussing German South Africans during the First World War, those texts mentioning these communities within the context of the Anglo-Boer War are marginally more accessible. The search for this material is frustrated, however, by the fact that much of such information that is available is hidden within texts that have no obvious connection to the German South African community. The most important sources for this study, that not only make mention of German settlements within South Africa, but include specific references to Kroondal itself, are *Rustenburg at War* by L. Wulfsohn and *Dagboek van Oskar Hintrager – saam met Christiaan de Wet, Mei tot September 1900*, as part of the *Christiaan de Wet – Annale 2*.⁵¹

In *Rustenburg at War*, Wulfsohn devotes an entire chapter to the role of Kroondal in the ABW as well as some of the Hermannsburg Mission stations in the surrounding region. The chapter is very well researched and draws upon much of the community’s own documentation, largely comprised of biographical material as well as family and church histories. As such it represents an important appraisal of the community during and prior to the conflict, and most importantly, from the perspective of someone from outside of the settlement.⁵² Similarly, the diary of Oskar Hintrager, as part of the *Christiaan de Wet – annale 2*, is of great significance due to the fact that Hintrager leaves an account of his

⁵⁰ L. W. F. Grundlingh, „‘n Aspek van Blanke Suid-Afrikaanse Groepsverhoudinge tydens die Eerste Wereldoorlog: Anti-Duitse Opstande, Mei 1915“. *South African Historical Journal* 12. 1980. pp. 65-92.

⁵¹ L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*. Cape Town. 1987. pp. 238-250; J. J. Oberholster (ed.). *Dagboek van Oskar Hintrager –saam met Christiaan de Wet, Mei tot September 1900*, Christiaan de Wet-annale, 2. pp. 15 & 16 August 1900. 1973. 112-113.

⁵² Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*. pp. 238-250.

impressions of Kroondal as an outsider traveling through the settlement. Hintrager's description of Kroondal forms part of his larger account of journeying and fighting with the Boer commando of Christiaan de Wet during the ABW. In this respect the diary has proved to be valuable to many authors seeking foreign perspectives on the people and specific events during the ABW.⁵³

Finally, of the very few general sources that are solely devoted to the investigation of German immigration and settlement in South Africa are the books, *Die Geschichte der Deutschen in Südafrika* by H. Gründwald; *Südafrika: Ein Stück Deutscher Geschichte* by H. Grimm^a and *Deutsche Kultur am Kap/German Culture at the Cape* by K. Bauch and A. Mertens. As valuable as these sources are, they are generally limited in their depth of detail and thus mostly serve to provide scholars with a relatively superficial overview of the history of the South African German community.⁵⁴

For those persons who wish to delve deeper into the history of German South Africans, there is consequently little alternative but to investigate a wide and varied accumulation of independent sources.⁵⁵ Such an investigation will inevitably lead the researcher to the private libraries and literature collections of the German communities themselves, where it is possible to augment the meager findings that are offered in the available published materials.

Primary Source Material

The documents that make up the primary source material of this study are all drawn from either the community archive or personal collections and memories of the inhabitants of Kroondal. The significance of this collection lies in the vigour and enthusiasm with which

⁵³ F. Pretorius, *Life on Commando During the Anglo Boer War 1899-1902*. Cape Town. 1999. pp. 471.

^a Hans Grimm (1875-1959) is most notable for his contribution to 'period' fictional writing regarding South Africa during the first quarter of the twentieth century. His writings and notes on the history of the country are published as *Südafrika: Ein Stück Deutscher Geschichte* and are primarily focused on the development of the German community in the Eastern Cape.

⁵⁴ K. Bauch & A. Mertens, *Deutsche Kultur am Kap*. Cape Town. 1964.; H. Grimm, *Südafrika: Ein Stück Deutscher Geschichte*.; H. Grünwald, *Die Geschichte der Deutschen in Südafrika*. Cape Town. 1993.; South African Society for Cultural History, *The Cultural Historical Contribution...*

⁵⁵ V. Carruthers, *The Magaliesberg*. Pretoria. 2000. pp. 277-278.

the community has maintained the annals of its history, whether regarding the largest of its institutions or the biography of many of its inhabitants. The result is a wealth of archival and literary material that stretches back to well beyond the founding of Kroondal and thereby creates the opportunity for a thorough investigation into the formation of the settlement's unique identity.

For the purposes of this study, the primary source material will be divided into three broad categories, the first of which being the histories of Kroondal's institutions such as the school and church, along with their associated organizations such as the choir and brass band. The second category belongs to the numerous and detailed compilations of family history, while the third and last category consists of collections of individual biographies, autobiographies, interviews and diaries.

When considering the various institutions that hold a place in Kroondal's society, none is more central to the community than the Lutheran church, which accordingly boasts a number of texts to commemorate its pivotal role within the district. As with much of the community's literary history, the material written about the church and its congregation primarily stems from anniversary celebrations and is usually compiled as a "Festschrift" by individuals within the community. Two such examples include *75 Jahre Kirchengemeinde Kroondal* by H. Pape (who has already been seen to have made significant contributions to the secondary source material) and *100 Jahre. Deutsche Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchengemeinde Kroondal 1896 bis 1996* by E. Penzhorn.⁵⁶ Another two commemorative booklets that are closely linked to the history of the Kroondaler church are *Der Kroondaler Kirchenchor* and *100 Jahre Kroondaler Posaunenchor, 1890-1990*, both of which play testimony to the community's love of and involvement in music such as the church choir and brass band.⁵⁷

The next most prominent institution in Kroondal, and one that has also virtually always been closely associated with the church, is the Kroondal German school or "Kroondaler Schulverein" that was founded in 1904. The legacy of German education within the region,

⁵⁶ H. Pape, *75 Jahre Kirchengemeinde Kroondal*. Pretoria. 1971.; E. Penzhorn (ed.), *100 Jahre. Deutsche Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchengemeinde Kroondal, 1896 bis 1996*. Kroondal. 1996.; (Unknown) *Die alte Lutherische Kirche in Kroondal*.

⁵⁷ R. Otto, W. Müller, F. Scriba & H. Bodenstein, *Der Kroondaler Kirchenchor*. Brits, 1996; (Unknown) *100 Jahre Kroondaler Posaunenchor 1890-1990*.

however, extends back another twenty-eight years to the Hermannsburg Mission school at Saron called “Morgensonne”. It was after the Morgensonne’s destruction in the Anglo-Boer War that the decision was taken to build what is now the German School at Kroondal, thereby providing the community with a proud legacy of education for both its members and beyond.⁵⁸

The specific history of the Kroondaler Schulverein, as it is found in texts such as *75 Jahre Kroondaler Schulverein* and *‘Morgensonne’ 1876-1976*, is further augmented by material that was compiled to celebrate the founding of the settlement of Kroondal itself. Other similar booklets include commemorative texts regarding the community’s youth group or “Deutsche Jugend Kroondal”, as well as the long standing tradition of the Kroondal German Day that has been held since 1920.⁵⁹

As has already been mentioned, one of the characteristics of Kroondal as a community is to record, not only the history of the settlement, but also most particularly that of the individual family groups, which have long been associated with it. Families such as Ottermann, Behrens, Wenhold, Wehrmann, Muhl and Penzhorn have all compiled detailed and descriptive family histories that document their arrival and settlement in South Africa.⁶⁰ These family records are in turn supplemented by a host of individual memoirs and biographies that combine to allow for amazingly intimate insights into the character and development of the community as a whole. Among some of the biographical material that deserves particular mention is that of three generations of the Behrens family, namely August Behrens, August Wilhelm Behrens and Hugo Behrens, all of whom have recorded

⁵⁸ T. Wenhold, H. Behrens, H. Stäcker, D. Krüger, & F. Scriba, 75

Jahre Kroondaler Schulverein. Krugersdorp. 1979. pp. 4.

⁵⁹ T. Wenhold, H. Behrens, H. Stäcker, D. Krüger & F. Scriba, *75 Jahre Kroondaler Schulverein*.; H. Pape, *‘Morgensonne’ 1876 – 1976*. 1976; H. & I. Behrens, (ed.), *Die Siedlung Kroondal – 100 Jahre 1889-1989*.

Festschrift zur Jubiläumsfeier am 4. November 1989. Rustenburg. 1989.; H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Kroondaler Deutschen Tag 1920 bis 1981*. Krugersdorp. 1981.; H. Muhl, I. Penzhorn, I. Fuls, H. Krueger, R. Ottermann & W. Ottermann (ed.), *Jubiläumsblatt. Die DJK feiert am 10. November 1953 ihr 25jähriges Bestehen*. Pretoria. 1953.

⁶⁰ H. & I. Behrens, H. & H. Stäcker (ed.), *100 Jahre Muhls in Südafrika – Festschrift*. Rustenburg. 1983.; H. Behrens & J. Wenhold (ed.), *Wenholdstreffen 1987*. Brits. 1987.; H. Behrens & H. Wehrmann, *Wehrmannstreffen. 150. Geburtstag des Missionars Ernst Friedrich Wehrmann – Wehrmannsruh*. 1983.; R. Ottermann, *Festschrift Otterman*. Stellenbosch. 1993.; B. Penzhorn, *Penzhorn-125 Jahre in SA*. 1987.; L. Wenhold & H. Behrens (ed.), *100 Jährige Jubiläumsfeier Familie Wenhold*. 1966.

their life experiences that collectively span from nineteenth-century Germany to the present day.⁶¹ Another important source is that of the recently transcribed diary of missionary Heinrich Behrens, which provides a fascinating chronicle of his thoughts beginning in 1885 and concluding shortly before his death in 1940.⁶²

Lastly, in an important venture by the women of Kroondal, recent years have seen concerted efforts to record individually the life stories of the community's women, which are bound under the title *Unser Frauen Erzählen*. These remembrances, although varied in length and detail, are quite substantial in number and provide an important facet to Kroondal's history that is so often missing within a world of male-dominated histories.⁶³

In conclusion, the literary collections that have been produced in Kroondal represent an underutilized and quite frequently, unexplored historical resource, which offers a great deal of value to academic research into South Africa's immigrant identity. Using these primary source materials in conjunction with the secondary sources, which serve to guide their interpretation, this study aims to examine the unique establishment of Kroondal's identity as a German South African settlement.

⁶¹ H. Behrens, *Ein Kroondaler – Hugo Behrens*; A. H. D. Behrens, *Der Farmer von Kroondal*. Hermannsburg 1956.; A. W. T. Behrens, *Unser Vater Erzählt...* Rustenburg. 1975.

⁶² N. Behrens, *Das Tagebuch des Missionaren Heinrich Behrens 1885-1940*.

⁶³ J. Wenhold & H. Wenhold, (ed.), *Unsere Frauen Erzählen* 2003. Rustenburg 2003.; J. Wenhold, (ed.), *Unsere Frauen Erzählen* 1996. Rustenburg. 1996.; H. Wenhold & H. Sebecke (ed.), *Unsere Frauen Erzählen 1951-2001*. Brits. 2001.

Chapter 3. *Heimat* and *Deutschtum*

This dissertation is fundamentally linked to the concept, or rather the term, “identity”. To be more precise, it is centred on the notion of a very specific German identity that finds its ideal expression in the German words, *Heimat* and *Deutschtum*.

Directly translated the words *Heimat* and *Deutschtum* can be read as “home//land” and “Germanness”, yet despite the literal accuracy of these English translations, their definitions fail to capture the loaded depth of meaning that the German terms possess when they are read within the context of their original language. Upon further examination, it becomes evident how both *Heimat* and *Deutschtum* also harbour a significant association that is closely bound to distinct eras of German history. It is this realization that necessitates that both of these terms are not treated as mere words, but rather as concepts that repeatedly elude the simplicity of literal translations, especially in the absence of equivalent terminology in the English language. Accordingly, the chapter proceeds with a cautious appraisal of the concepts, *Heimat* and *Deutschtum*, and of how these complex notions relate to the framework of German national identity, including the identity of those German populations that exist outside of the national borders of Germany. This chapter therefore serves as the theoretical basis upon which the remainder of the dissertation is able to examine and extract the meaning and compounded identity that lies deeply embedded in the descriptive title, “the *Afrikadeutschen* of Kroondal”.

Before proceeding to examine the nature of these German definitions it is important first to embark upon a brief discussion of the seemingly self evident and increasingly generic English word, “identity”, and especially, of how it pertains to historical studies. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* the word “identity” dates back to 1570 when it was defined as “that quality of condition of being the same” or of “absolute or essential sameness”.¹ This definition was expanded in 1638 to include the synonyms “individuality” and “personality”, which the *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary* qualifies as the “sameness of a thing with itself”. In contrast, the use of “identity” within academic contexts is a far more recent advent that can be traced back to the mid twentieth century and that has been loosely credited to scholars in the field of psychology such as Sigmund Freud

¹ *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary; The Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary.*

and Erik Erikson.² From these origins the broader concept of “identity” was quick to have an impact upon the other branches of the Humanities, where it has firmly established itself as one of the most prolific trans-disciplinary concepts within these fields of research.

One of many authors who provide a practical observation on the multi-faceted nature of “identity” within the Humanities is Thomas Fitzgerald in the book *Metaphors of Identity*. Here Fitzgerald illustrates the varied use of the “identity” concept as it occurs within different branches of the social sciences:

...the range of identity topics is extremely wide, overlapping areas such as mental health, ethnicity, gender, education, social conflict, and change... students suddenly realized that identity was something that they had been studying all along, only under different labels in diverse fields. Philosophy, they began to recognize, typically considers personhood. Psychologists study ego, personality and self-actualization. Sociologists tend to talk about social identities in group contexts, while anthropologists write about cultural identity.³

The point, according to Fitzgerald, is that ultimately “we are all talking about the same animal (namely) the self in context”, that appears throughout the Humanities under the guise of different subject specific metaphors.⁴ For Fitzgerald these “metaphors of identity” are among the most clearly visible clues of the connectivity that exists between the various branches of these sciences and of how identity manages effectively to embody the nature of this connection.

This description of identity as “the self in context” arguably represents the most basic definition of the term, from which all of its other applications can be derived, as is evident in popular expressions such as “ego identity” and “national identity”.⁵ In turn, identity terminology can also be separated into expressions of either individual or group identity whereby individual identity can be said to embody “the self” in context with itself and group identity as “the self” in relation to others. From these variations in its definition, it is easy to understand why identity has come to represent something of a “central construct” in the social sciences, and how the range and fluidity of its function enables it to remain relevant

² T. Fitzgerald, *Metaphors of Identity*. p. 3.; F. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*. 2005. p. 59.

³ T. Fitzgerald, *Metaphors of Identity*. p. 3.

⁴ T. Fitzgerald, *Metaphors of Identity*. p. 3.

⁵ K. Woodward, *Identity and Difference*. 1997. p. 1.; E. Erikson, *Identity. Youth & Crisis*. 1971. pp. 16, 45, 50.

to virtually any aspect of human endeavour (humanity).⁶ Therefore, when considering an adequate description for investigating identity in historical studies, it might well be argued that history primarily concerns itself with the development and change of identities within cultures and communities over a period of time. In this regard, history can be seen to be striving for a more thorough understanding of the past by placing both groups and individuals within the context of their era and in so doing, obtaining a better understanding of humanity's development as a whole.

As with most scholars in the social sciences, historians have by-and-large also accepted the notion that identity is largely formed through a process of individual construction and does not represent an inherent or static quality (of personhood) in a personality. One author, who discusses the "construction of identity", is Manuel Castells in the book, *The Power of Identity*, where he quotes Craig Calhoun, in stating that "self-knowledge (is) always a construction no matter how much it feels like a discovery".⁷ According to Castells, "identity", which he describes as the "source of meaning and experience" in people's lives, is developed through a process by which individuals both consciously and unconsciously internalize aspects of culture that are used in the formation of identity. Castells refers to these aspects as "cultural attributes" and also as "building materials" in the construction of identity and includes among them history, geography, biology, collective memory and personal fantasies.⁸

A further point of discussion in *The Power of Identity* is the separation of identity into primary and secondary categories that rank according to the degree with which an individual might identify them as a source of meaning in their lives. In describing this distinction, Castells adheres to the sociological norm whereby he refers to secondary identities as "roles" and primary identities as simply "identity":

Roles (for example, to be a worker, a mother, a neighbour, a socialist militant, a union member, a basketball player, a churchgoer, and a smoker, at the same time) are defined by norms structured by the institutions and organizations of society. Their relative weights in influencing people's behavior depend upon negotiations and arrangements between individuals and these institutions and organizations.

⁶ T. Fitzgerald, *Metaphors of Identity*. p. 3.

⁷ M. Castells, *The Power of Identity*. pp. 6, 7.

⁸ M. Castells, *The Power of Identity*. pp. 6, 7.

Identities (on the other hand,) are sources of meaning for the (social) actors themselves, and by themselves, constructed through a process of individuation.⁹

Castells does, however, concede the fact that some “self-definitions” or identities, can indeed “coincide with social roles, for instance when to be a father is the most important self-definition from the point of view of the actor”.¹⁰ As such, Castells offers a summary for this categorization by suggesting that while the “roles organize the functions”, it is the identities that “organize the meaning” from which individuals ultimately extract and interpret a purpose for their lives. In this vein, Castells reinforces the distinction between roles and identities by using an illustration of how a plurality of roles (as is represented by the above example of simultaneously being a worker, a mother, a neighbour, etc.) is not typically a source of internal conflict for an individual, whereas being host to a plurality of identities usually is.¹¹

This view is echoed in the book, *Social Identities – Multidisciplinary Approaches*, that is edited by Gary Taylor and Steve Spencer and which proposes a similar interpretation to that of Castells’ notion regarding the distinction between roles and identities:

Is there a unitary self, or a collection of social selves? We each possess a number of social identities: Father/mother etc. Yet is there not simultaneously a self who oversees the faces we present and who choreographs these different roles to portray a pattern of predictable reactions with some core personality?¹²

In answering these questions, Taylor and Spencer proceed to acknowledge the intricate nature of identity and conclude that not only are identities constructed but that their formation is significantly “stage managed” by the individual.¹³

As a manner of introducing his own interpretations into the development of identity within the sphere of sociology, Castells delivers the following challenge to readers and fellow scholars alike:

⁹ M. Castells, *The Power of Identity*. pp. 6, 7.

¹⁰ M. Castells, *The Power of Identity*. p. 7.

¹¹ M. Castells, *The Power of Identity*. p. 7.

¹² G. Taylor & S. Spencer (ed.), *Social Identities – Multidisciplinary Approaches*. 2004. p. 1.

¹³ G. Taylor & S. Spencer (ed.), *Social Identities – Multidisciplinary Approaches*. 2004. pp. 1-3.

It is easy to agree on the fact that, from a sociological perspective, all identities are constructed. The real issue is how, from what, by whom, and for what.¹⁴

Unfortunately, Castells' review of identity construction proceeds within a framework of socio-political analysis that, due to its specific focus on class and ideological divisions, does not retain significant relevance to the nature of this study. However, his challenge remains as an accurate appraisal of this study's underlying curiosity regarding the nature and origins of German-South African identity and the formation and continued existence of culturally German communities in many areas of the country.¹⁵

The flipside to this notion of identity as a successful vehicle for conducting personal, social and interdisciplinary research is the fact that its inability to maintain a static and universally accepted definition is not conducive to definitive scientific analysis.¹⁶ Thus, despite its widespread use and undoubted popularity, the employment of identity as an academic concept has received significant criticism and moreover elicited suggestions of supplementing it with other, more easily quantifiable terminology. It is interesting to note that Erik Erikson is among these critics, despite having been largely responsible for establishing "identity" in its current academic context.¹⁷ Erikson mentions his reservations towards the term in the introduction to *Identity, Youth & Crisis* where he writes:

"Identity" and "identity crisis"... alternately circumscribe something so large and so seemingly self-evident that to demand a definition would almost seem petty, while at other times they designate something so narrow for purposes of measurement that the over-all meaning is lost and it could just as well be called something else.¹⁸

In Erikson's opinion, the solution to this 'crisis in identity'¹⁹ is not to demonize the use of a term that has wound itself so successfully into the modern psyche, but rather proactively to adopt and promote some "more measurable" variations of the term. These typically include compounded terms such as "self identity", "sexual identity" and "identity crisis" as well as alternate expressions such as race, gender, language and class.²⁰ More recently, author

¹⁴ M. Castells, *The Power of Identity*. p. 7.

¹⁵ M. Castells, *The Power of Identity*. pp. 6, 7.

¹⁶ C. Weedon, *Identity and Culture. Narratives of Difference and Belonging*. New York. 2003. p. 1.

¹⁷ F. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*. 2005. pp. 61-62.

¹⁸ E. Erikson, *Identity. Youth & Crisis*. 1971. p. 15.

¹⁹ F. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*. 2005. p. 61.

²⁰ E. Erikson, *Identity. Youth & Crisis*. 1971. pp. 15, 16.; F. Cooper. *Colonialism in Question*. 2005. p. 61.

Frederick Cooper has also contributed an in-depth commentary on the “use and abuse” of “identity” in the book *Colonialism in Question* where he suggests that the general overuse of the term has served significantly to depreciate the value of its possible applications. Ultimately however, both Erikson and Cooper acknowledge the important role that identity plays in the social sciences, yet stress that this task should ideally be shared by more readily quantifiable terminology.²¹

Deutschtum

As with the English term of “Identity”, that at its most basic can be taken to represent “the self in context”,²² the term *Heimat* can be regarded as “the self” in context to its physical surroundings while *Deutschtum* could be understood as “the self” in context to its culture. Although these two expressions of identity certainly overlap, this chapter will examine them separately before applying them in the further context of the South African German community in the remainder of this dissertation.

As was mentioned in this chapter’s introduction, the word *Deutschtum* can be taken to be read as Germanness. This translation does not necessarily provide the reader with any greater understanding of what Germanness might imply apart from the fact that Germanness would be considered as an essential quality in someone who is German, or at least who is considered to be German. In this respect, it is possible to see how an investigation of the German community of Kroondal should be undertaken with at least some perspective on what it actually means to be German or perhaps, what some of the more predominant (popular) ideas regarding Germanness have been.

Germanus, Gair, Germane, Alamanni & Deutsch

The exact origins of the word “German” are conjecture, but in examining the story of its most probable beginnings lies a fitting starting point to the history of German nationalism and the multifaceted term of *Deutschtum*.

²¹ E. Erikson, *Identity. Youth & Crisis*. 1971. p. 15, 16, 208.; F. Cooper. *Colonialism in Question*. 2005. pp. 61, 67, 75, 90.

²² T. Fitzgerald, *Metaphors of Identity*. p. 3.

One of the first questions that come to mind regarding Germany is its name and why its inhabitants refer to it as *Deutschland* while most of the rest of Europe (besides the Nordic countries and the Netherlands) call it derivatives of Germany and Alamanni.²³

Germaniya (Bulgarian)

Germania (Greek, Italian, Romanian & Georgian)

Ghearmáin (Irish)

A' Ghearmailt (Scottish Gaelic)

Alemania (Spanish)

Allemagne (French)

Alemanha (Portuguese)

Almanya (Turkish)

Tyskland (Norwegian, Swedish, Danish)²⁴

According to linguistic research, the word *deutsch* stems from the Old High German word *diutisc* that simply translates as “of the people” and has its origins in the Germanic language of Western Frankia. The use of *deutsch* to serve as a broad descriptor of the people living in the German territories and states only occurred gradually, however, and while *Deutschland* began to predominate by the seventeenth century, other names such as *Tutsch land*, *Almania*, *teütschland* and *Teutonia* all still remained in use.²⁵ For countries such as France, Spain and Portugal the favoured terms for Germany are all variants of the word Alamanni, which was the name of a powerful alliance of Germanic tribes that were first mentioned by Roman authors in the second century AD.²⁶ Yet, it was one Roman author, Cornelius Tacitus, whose work, *Germania*, was ultimately responsible for establishing the term “German” in its modern usage and who inadvertently influenced generations of German nationalists both before and after the creation of the German nation-state. In this text, which was originally titled *De Origine et situ Germanorum*, that translates freely to *Concerning the situation, manners and inhabitants of Germany*²⁷,

²³ J. Simpson & E. Weiner, *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 1989. p. 468.

²⁴ WIKIPEDIA, ‘Names of Germany’ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Names_of_Germany>, Access: 2012-03-05.

²⁵ H. Alberand et al. (ed.), *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm*. 6 Band. 1983. p. 821.

²⁶ M. Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*. 1990. pp. 12-13.

²⁷ C. Tacitus, *The Germany and Agricola of Tacitus*, 2005. Ebook.

<<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/7524/pg7524.html>>, Access: 2012-05-11.

Tacitus undertakes a socio-political description of the Germanic tribes of that time. It is thought that the word *Germania* may well have been appropriated into Latin by the Romans from a Gaelic/Gaulish word similar to the old Irish (Celtic) word *gair*, meaning neighbour. In this case *gair* was used to describe the peoples living east of the River Rhine and its first documented use in the Latin language was by Julius Caesar, following his conquest of Gaul (France). By the time that *Germania* had been written in 98 AD, the term had become a standard description of the Romans when referring to the collective German tribes.²⁸

In order to understand the importance of *Germania* in the development of German national identity, it is necessary to make a clear distinction as to the nature of its relevance in German history. As a document, *Germania* was written in the pattern of Greek and Roman ethnography in that it discusses the origins, social and physical characteristics of a foreign people along with observations regarding the geography of the land.²⁹ Accordingly, from the time that the document was discovered in a German monastery in the mid fifteenth century, its description of the people living in ancient Germany was met with a great deal of interest, particularly by the emerging German humanists, who saw it as a window onto an original form of German identity. This fascination with the *Germania* text as a vehicle of German proto-identity would ultimately endure into the early twentieth century where its interpretation was pushed to the extreme by the National Socialist ideals that endorsed German superiority.³⁰ One of the better known passages from *Germania* that had a marked influence on the pattern of German nationalist thought, is that of Tacitus' perception of the ethnic origins of the German people:

The Germani themselves, I am inclined to think, are natives of the land and very little affected by immigration or friendly interaction with other nations...For myself, I accept the view of those who think that the peoples of Germania have never been tainted by intermarriage with other nations, and stand out as a race distinctive, pure and unique of its kind. Hence the physical type, if one may generalize about so vast

²⁸ H. Mattingly & J. B. Rives, *Tacitus. Agricola and Germania*. 2009. p. xiv.; C. Krebs, *A Most Dangerous Book. Tacitus' Germania from the Roman Empire to the Third Reich*. 2011. p. 19.; WIKIPEDIA, 'Germanic Peoples', <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germanic_peoples>, Access: 2012-05-11.

²⁹ H. Mattingly & J. B. Rives, *Tacitus. Agricola and Germania*. 2009. p. xxxvii.

³⁰ J. Glover, *Humanity. A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*. p. 320.

a population, is everywhere the same – wild blue eyes, reddish hair and huge frames that excel only in violent effort.³¹

It is not difficult to see how this impression of racial purity would have successfully influenced generations of German scholars and laymen alike in their search for a collective German identity. As such, much of the emphasis that has long been placed upon ethnicity as a prerequisite of German identity and nationality can be found to have originated within these passages. Over the course of the centuries that followed *Germania*'s discovery, Tacitus' descriptions of ancient Germany were considered to be an accurate portrayal of the German past and it was not until well into the twentieth century that scholars began to question its reliability as an historical document.³²

This re-evaluation of the *Germania* text was given substantial vigour following the collapse of Nazi Germany when, as with many other symbols that had been co-opted into the framework of Nazism, *Germania* was afforded special attention by scholars who were trying to gain insight into the Nazi phenomenon. What the investigations began to yield was that, not only was there substantial doubt as to whether Tacitus had actually ever personally travelled to the German territory, but that the description of the *Germani* as a single ethnic group was significantly generalized.³³ Indeed, even if Tacitus had visited the German frontier, any knowledge that might have been available from the unconquered German interior would have been largely based upon the “hearsay” of a variety of sources. This situation is equally compounded by the text's lack of “anything that (one) might describe as historical data”,³⁴ particularly in terms of linguistic observations and the differences in material culture between the tribes.³⁵ The result is that historians now view *Germania* at best, as a highly stereotyped and largely unsubstantiated document, and at worst, as a “virtually unusable source of reliable information about the early peoples of northern Europe.”³⁶ When seen from the perspective of contemporary history, there simply is not evidence to support Tacitus' claim of German ethnic homogeneity within the geography that he regards as Germania. In the words of author Christopher Krebs, “the timeline between the Germanic past and the German present is fractured” and the

³¹ H. Mattingly & J. B. Rives, *Tacitus. Agricola and Germania*. 2009. pp. 35-36.

³² H. Mattingly & J. B. Rives, *Tacitus. Agricola and Germania*. 2009. p. xli.

³³ H. Mattingly & J. B. Rives, *Tacitus. Agricola and Germania*. 2009. p. xlii.

³⁴ H. Mattingly & J. B. Rives, *Tacitus. Agricola and Germania*. 2009. p. xxxvii.

³⁵ C. Krebs, *A Most Dangerous Book. Tacitus' Germania from the Roman Empire to the Third Reich*. 2011. p. 19.

³⁶ H. Mattingly & J. B. Rives, *Tacitus. Agricola and Germania*. 2009. p. xli-xlii.

Germania manuscript cannot be used as a vehicle with which to portray the origins of today's German nation.³⁷ And yet, in the same breath, *Germania* continues to hold an inescapable relevance to the foundation of modern Germany and one that remains immune to its lack of historical credibility. The justification for this apparent paradox is best explained within the context of national identity.

As is the case with all the forms of identity that were discussed earlier in this chapter, national identities are considered to be the manufactured product of a carefully chosen narrative and history. As the historian Susanne Lachenicht writes, "the function of national histories has been less a matter of reconstruction than construction, since authors created narratives to nourish national identities and nationalisms". It is within this widely accepted perspective of identity, as the inescapable product of a construct, that *Germania* receives its ultimate relevance in the German national narrative. As such, its relevance to this dissertation's study of German national identity has very little to do with the historical accuracy of the text. Rather, it is the impact that Tacitus' text had upon the imagination and consciousness of German nationalism and its subsequent incorporation into centuries of its developing national narrative that remain undeniably relevant to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century German identity.

Accordingly, it is important to note that this dissertation is ultimately less interested in the objective accuracy of the events that have been incorporated into the German national narrative. Rather, it chooses to remain focused upon the nature of these narratives (both as objective and subjective constructs) and the effect that they had in shaping a German national identity. In this way, the development of German nationalism can ultimately be seen as a combination of factual, idealized and even fictitious portrayals of history that together helped to create a popular image of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century *Deutschtum*.

As a term, *Deutschtum* made its first prominent appearance within the German language in the mid nineteenth century, after it had ostensibly been coined in the fervour of German anti-Napoleonic sentiment in the early 1800's. Over the course of the next one hundred years it remained closely associated with varying forms of German nationalism and national consciousness before receding in prominence after the fall of Nazi Germany in

³⁷ C. Krebs, *A Most Dangerous Book. Tacitus' Germania from the Roman Empire to the Third Reich*. 2011. p. 19.

1945.³⁸ This association within the sphere of German national identity becomes evident when investigating the various dictionary definitions that are available for explaining the term. While most German-English dictionaries offer simplistic translations for *Deutschtum*, either as “Germanness” or “Germanity”, they typically fail in offering any further explanation as to what these effectively delineate. One notable exception to this pattern is that of the *Oxford-Harrap Standard German-English Dictionary* that defines *Deutschtum* as follows:

Deutschtum, *n. –s/*. **1.** Germanity; German nature; **das D. im Ausland**, German national customs and culture preserved by groups of emigrants (*cp.2*); **die Einwanderer haben ihr D. bewahrt**, the immigrants have preserved their German language and way of life; the German immigrants have preserved their language and national characteristics. **2. Coll. Das D. im Ausland, in aller Welt**, German people and culture abroad, the world over (*cp. 1*).³⁹

Within this definition, the dictionary undertakes to make a distinction between the two possible connotations that are both present within *Deutschtum*, alternatively as “German nature”, that is depicted as “German national customs and culture” or as German people (and culture) across the world. Although the *Oxford-Harrap* dictionary allows for a measure of ambiguity within its explanation, in that it proffers “culture” within both of its definitions, the essential differentiation that it suggests is between the entity of German culture on the one hand and that of the ethnic German people on the other. This distinction is certainly seen more clearly within the definitions of German language dictionaries such as the *DUDEN* German dictionary that provides the following interpretation:

Deutschtum, *das; -s: a) Gesamtheit der für die Deutschen typischen Lebensäußerungen; deutsche Wesenart: das Wesen des –s; b) Zugehörigkeit zum deutschen Volk: Ich habe ... mein D. aufgegeben und bin Amerikaner geworden; c) Gesamtheit der deutschen Volksgruppen im Ausland: das D. im Ausland;*⁴⁰

(Deutschtum, a) The collective characteristics of a German way of life; German nature: the nature of the Germans; **b)** Belonging to the German *Volk*: I have ...

³⁸ H. Alberand et al. (ed.), *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhem Grimm*. 6 Band. 1983. p. 821.

³⁹ T. Jones, *The Oxford – Harrap Standard German-English Dictionary*. Volume I. 1977. p. 26.

⁴⁰ G. Drosolowski, *Duden. Das große Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*. 1976. p.

given up my *Deutschtum* and have become an American; **c)** The sum of German ethnic groups living outside of Germany: das D. im Ausland;)

(Own translation)

In this extract the editors of the *Duden* dictionary decided upon a further separation within the definition that refers to German ethnicity under the points **b)** and **c)** but clearly retain the division between the ethnic descriptions of *Deutschtum* and one that is centered upon the cultural facets of Germanness under point **a)**. Yet, perhaps the most succinct commentary that is available with regard to this term comes from the antiquated *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm* that was first published in Leipzig in 1860,

Deutschtum. 1. *Inbegriff der den Deutschen eigenden wesensmerkmale, kultur- und lebensformen.*

2. *kollektive Personenbezeichnung, Deutsche.*⁴¹

Deutschtum. 1. the essence of the particular German nature, culture and lifestyle.

2. collective reference to people, Germans.

(Own translation)

From these definitions it is sufficiently evident that the term *Deutschtum* allows for an interesting distinction between a cultural concept of Germanness and one that is primarily founded upon ethnic parameters. In the case of the latter, the use of *Deutschtum* when referring to ethnic German communities, even in the absence of any culturally German characteristics, represents an important aspect within the concept of German identity. This distinction and the critical role that ethnicity has played within the later developments of German nationalism, is therefore not only of particular relevance to German national identity, but also to the distinct identity that was perceived and maintained by generations of German immigrants across the world.

As has already been mentioned, the rise of modern German nationalism that gave birth to words such as *Deutschtum* is typically considered to have occurred in the wake of the French Revolution of 1789. It was with this event of French national self-determination,

⁴¹ H. Alberand et al. (ed.), *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhlem Grimm*. 6 Band. 1983. p. 821.

together with the ensuing Napoleonic wars and French occupation of German lands that evoked an outpouring of patriotism from among greater Germany. However, it was not until the mid eighteenth century that nationalist sentiment overflowed in the form of the 1848 revolution and thereafter, only with the onset of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, that German nationalism was finally grounded in the political reality of a united Germany.⁴² It was within the span of that century, from Napoleon's withdrawal in 1813 to the formation of definitive citizenship laws in 1913, that a growing German national consciousness gradually determined the nature of German citizenship or *Staatsangehörigkeit*.⁴³

German *Staatsangehörigkeit*, that literally translates to state membership, was significantly haphazard over the course of the first half of the nineteenth century and remained primarily focused upon serving the state's interests. This is not unsurprising given that before unification in 1871, Germany had remained a political patchwork of states that were still dominated by the conservative remnants of feudal governance. It was largely in response to these policies, or to be more accurate, the notable absence of clear legislation with which to delineate German citizenship, that the 1848 revolutionaries seized their chance to effect liberal reforms and the possibility of a unified Germany. Although the 1848 Revolution ultimately failed in its bid to orchestrate the political reorganization of Germany, it did create an ideal platform for the introduction of political concepts that would increasingly develop into a distinct form of German nationalism by the beginning of the twentieth century. One of these concepts was that of the *Kulturnation* that, although only coined as a term by the historian Friedrich Meinecke in 1907, became a fundamental cornerstone of German national consciousness in the wake of unification in 1871.⁴⁴

This premise of the *Kulturnation* (cultural nation) and its counterpoint, the *Staatsnation* (political nation) represent one of the seminal theories of national identity within the broader scope of political science. When they were first developed, both Germany and Europe were in the midst of a headlong pursuit of their own nationalist ideologies, which in turn had placed the study of nationalism and national character and identity at the forefront of political consciousness of the time. In a broad sense, the definition of nationalism is well articulated in a quote taken from another historian, Eugen Lemberg in the book *Nationalism* by Peter Alter. Here nationalism is described as “a system of ideas, values

⁴² H. Herwig, *Hammer or Anvil? Modern Germany 1648-present*. 1994. p. 98, 103, 127.

⁴³ K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, p. 18.

⁴⁴ M. Oergel, *Culture and Identity: historicity in German literature and thought 1770-1815*. 2006. p. 281.

and norms, an image of the world and society which makes a large social group aware of where it belongs and invests this sense of belonging with a particular value.”⁴⁵ When this understanding is seen within the context of the *Kultur* and *Staatsnation*, Meinecke’s theory implies the existence of two fundamental models (of ideas, values and norms) that typically characterize national identities. Of these the “political” model of the *Staatsnation* represents a nationalism that is founded upon an equality of citizenship that is based upon shared civic ideologies regardless of “social, economic, ethnic or religious” differences. In contrast, the concept of the *Kulturnation* is driven by notions of a shared heritage that included aspects such as language and customs, and towards the end of the nineteenth century, an increasing accentuation of an overtly ethnic interpretation of *Kultur*.⁴⁶

Although Germany briefly flirted with the concept of a *Staatsnation* during the 1848 Revolution, a juncture that some historians have described as the “point at which Germany failed to turn”, it increasingly embraced the notion of a *Kulturnation* that duly began to influence its policies of *Staatsangehörigkeit*. Up until the 1871 unification of Germany, the policies of citizenship among the various German states typically followed the very pragmatic Prussian model that was based upon economic rather than cultural or ethnic considerations. With this “exclusionary legislation”, citizenship was primarily granted according to an individual’s service to the state and was lost by those who chose to emigrate. This is not to say that the position of familial descent (*ius sanguinis* – the law of blood)⁴⁷ did not play an important role in the rights to citizenship, but rather that these criteria were primarily instituted as a means of excluding the state’s responsibility to foreign migrants, many of whom were ethnic Germans.⁴⁸ Following the unification of Germany into the German Reich, the revision of citizenship laws in 1873 began to move towards an ethnic interpretation of the *ius sanguinis* that eventually formed the basis of the 1913 legislation on German *Staatsangehörigkeit*.⁴⁹

One of the important aspects that helped to shape the German citizenship laws in the second half of the nineteenth century was the extent of German emigration, particularly to

⁴⁵ P. Alter, *Nationalism*. 1985. p. 4.

⁴⁶ P. Alter, *Nationalism*. 1989. p. 8.

⁴⁷ E. Kolinsky W. van der Will (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern German Culture*. “German national identity”, J. Breuille. 1998. p. 54.

⁴⁸ K. O’Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, pp. 20-21

⁴⁹ E. Kolinsky W. van der Will (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern German Culture*. “German national identity”, J. Breuille. 1998. p. 54.

America. The enormity of the German Diaspora, that literally extended to millions of immigrants around the world, caught the interest of the German public who began to pressurize the state into effecting measures that would maintain ties to the expatriate communities.⁵⁰ This view was undoubtedly accentuated by the acquisition of German colonies after 1871 that brought further awareness to Germany's participation upon an international stage and added impetus to the desire to redefine the previous boundaries of citizenship. The result was that by 1913, there had been an extensive debate around the concept of Germanness that effectively helped to propel an ethnocultural notion of *Deutschtum* into the midst of Germany's national identity.⁵¹

This awareness of Germanness was perhaps most evident in the policies that were initiated within the country's newly established colonial empire, which effectively represented an international showcase of German culture. In an ironic reversal to the policies of pre-colonial Germany (before 1884), immigrants were now actively recruited in order to help develop these colonial acquisitions, while simultaneously being encouraged to retain their German heritage. As was the case in most European colonies, the role of racial divisions took on an exaggerated importance as the authorities sought to maintain clear distinctions of power and prevent inevitable cases of miscegenation. In the case of Germany's pre-existing ethnic national consciousness, the importance of race alongside that of language and culture received a level of attention that was not yet commonplace within Germany itself. These factors combined to create a particular image of *Deutschtum* among colonial Germans that author Daniel Walther describes as being hard working, prosperous, ensuring the maintenance of German linguistic and cultural traditions and preserving racial distinctions.⁵²

Following Germany's defeat in World War One and the failure of the brief experiment in democracy of the Weimar Republic, Germany re-emerged to embrace an ethnocultural view of citizenship, although this time with the overtly racial slant of Nazism.⁵³ While a great deal has been written about the rise of Nazi Germany and the acceptance of its infamous policies by the German people, it is safe to say that the movement held great appeal in its re-justification of German national pride, especially in the wake of nearly two

⁵⁰ K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, pp. 22-23.

⁵¹ K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, p. 26-30.

⁵² D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 2, 44, 52.

⁵³ W. Carr, *A History of Germany 1815-1990*. 1991. p. 251

decades of disastrous war and economic collapse.⁵⁴ It was from this ultra-nationalist ideology that Adolf Hitler propagated his vision of a German national community or *Volksgemeinschaft* that drew on the pseudo-scientific concept of racial Darwinism and promoted the notion of inherent German superiority.⁵⁵ This radically ethnic interpretation of nationalism proposed the primacy of race above culture, theorizing that all culture was merely an inevitable product of biological determinants. The result was the active recognition of all ethnic German communities around the world as *Volksdeutsche* alongside the German citizens or *Reichsdeutsche*. The effect that this recognition had on the expatriate communities was fairly significant in that it provided them with a clearly defined identity and reaffirmed the efforts that they had made in maintaining their Germanness.⁵⁶

It was during the Nazi era that the ethnic interpretation of *Deutschtum* reached its fullest expression and was driven to its horrific conclusion in the crucible of the Second World War and the racially driven atrocities of the holocaust. The development of ethnically exclusive nationalism and its inglorious history have since attracted a significant amount of attention from scholars wishing to investigate the terrible spiral that these ideologies orchestrated and that ended in two devastating World Wars. Among the most salient explanations for these phenomena is not only the centrality that the nation was afforded within the nationalist construct, but also the nation's imbuement as a living organism that should be defended and perhaps more importantly, fed. As with other living organisms, nations were seen as subject to the evolutionary principles of Darwinism and were dealt with in emotive terms that discussed "the health, life and death" of collective peoples. In these terms the author Jonathan Glover refers to nationalism as a trap into which whole populations poured their allegiance in the vain understanding that their lives were inseparable from that of the nation.⁵⁷ Similarly, the wellbeing of the 'national organism' provided the ultimate justification for many of the worst atrocities that were perpetrated against both its own members, but most especially against those who fell outside of its collective ethnic boundaries.⁵⁸ It was due to the extent of its connotation with this

⁵⁴ H. Herwig, *Hammer or Anvil? Modern Germany 1648-present*. 1994. p. 289.

⁵⁵ J. Glover, *Humanity. A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*. p. 321.

⁵⁶ P. Furlong, *Between Crown and Swastika. The Impact of the Radical Right on the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement in the Fascist Era*. 1991. 74-77.; K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, p. 60-66.; A. Hagemann, *Südafrika und das "Dritte Reich". Rassenpolitische Affinität und machtpolitische Rivalität*. 1989. pp. 88-87.

⁵⁷ J. Glover, *Humanity. A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*. pp. 144, 195.

⁵⁸ J. Glover, *Humanity. A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*. p. 144, 195.

disastrous chapter of German nationalism at the end of the Second World War that *Deutschtum* rapidly receded from widespread use in the German language.⁵⁹

Heimat

In this chapter's appraisal of national identity one aspect that has not been discussed is that of land, and the central role that it occupies within a modern conception of nationalism. Where the topic of *Deutschtum* approached the questions of "Who and what is German?", this section under the title of *Heimat*, will instead seek to quantify, "What is Germany?" and more importantly, the role that spatial awareness has come to play in defining significant aspects of German identity.

The issue of land remains one of the most recognizable attributes in any discussion of nationalism as author Anthony Smith relates:

Nations must possess compact, well defined territories. People and territory must, as it were, belong to each other. But the earth in question cannot be just anywhere; it is not any stretch of land. It is, and must be, the 'historic' land...where terrain and people have exerted mutual, and beneficial influence over several generations.⁶⁰

What this implies is that the question of German identity cannot be accurately answered without an investigation of the idea of a German homeland. However, from the outset it is important to note that this statement certainly does not contend that a nation cannot exist in the face of the loss of its native geography, as is well evidenced by the centuries of the Jewish diaspora, but rather that the memory of an original homeland plays a pivotal role within the construct of national identity. In this it must be remembered that all forms of identity are ultimately the product of an imaginative construct and that while a nation's land may appear to represent the most permanent and tangible aspect of its identity, its true value within this identity is almost always in the form of its absence and loss.⁶¹

⁵⁹ K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, (eds.). *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, pp. 34-35.

⁶⁰ A. Smith, *National Identities*. 1991. p. 9.

⁶¹ P. Blickle, *Heimat. A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. 2002. p. 67.; M. Oergel, *Culture and Identity. Historicity in German Literature and Thought 1770-1815*. 2006. p. 13.

Before continuing to expound upon the metaphysical aspects of *Heimat*, the question can first be asked, “Does *Heimat* equate to the idea of a German homeland?”. The answer to this question is both yes and no.

The German-English dictionary definition of *Heimat* reads as follows:

Heimat, f. (-, *pl.* -en) home; native land, country *or* place; homeland, (*Law*) domicile.⁶²

Although this definition of *Heimat* as “home, native land, country (and) homeland” can all be viewed as correct, the term nevertheless manages to elude all static definitions for the simple reason that *Heimat* ultimately represents a highly individualized aspect of identity in the guise of spatial belonging. Accordingly, the most universally applicable part of this definition is that which reads “...or place”, thereby acknowledging the necessary space within which *Heimat* can and will continue to remain a personalized form of geographically determined identity.⁶³

Why then is *Heimat* ideally represented in the form of absence or loss? To begin with, *Heimat* does not equate to the English word “house” when the latter is implied within the sentence “I am going home”. In German this sentence would read “*Ich gehe nach Hause*”. The closest understanding of the word “home” in relation to that of *Heimat* is found within more extensive English dictionaries such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Here, under the lower rung of definitions, “home” is related to as “a place, region, or state to which one properly belongs, in which one’s affections centre, or where one finds refuge, rest or satisfaction.” The description continues to include “home” as “one’s own country, one’s native land. Used by Britons abroad, by inhabitants of (former) British colonies and territories, and by those of the mother-country, the “old country”.⁶⁴ In the light of this definition it is important to note that *Heimat* contains a plurality of understanding, not only in the way that it is adopted within the identity of different individuals, but also for the manner in which *Heimat* has been co-opted for use within nationalist imagery and rhetoric. This ‘nationalized’ *Heimat* and its varied uses within the history of German politics,

⁶² H. Betteridge, *Cassell’s German-English Dictionary*. 1978. p. 298.

⁶³ P. Blickle, *Heimat. A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. 2002. p. 3.

⁶⁴ J. Simpson & E. Weiner, *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 1989. p. 322.

however, highlights one of the primary tensions that exist within the *Heimat* discourse that is first and foremost built around a core understanding of innocence.⁶⁵

The immediate linguistic origin of *Heimat* can be found in the Old High German word of *heimoti* that signified “the (legal) right to be present at a certain place or location”⁶⁶. Although abstract associations were already evident towards the end of the sixteenth century when the word *heimut* was used in connection with the Christian concept of heaven, its contemporary depth of meaning was only fully fledged over the course of European Romanticism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁶⁷ The development of this movement, which arose as an intellectual rebuff of the preceding era of the Enlightenment, sought to validate the use of emotion as a legitimate avenue of human experience. This stood in contrast to the centrality of rational thought that the proponents of the Enlightenment had advocated as a liberation from the religious mysticism that had held sway over centuries of European philosophy.⁶⁸ One of the primary events that precipitated the onset of the Romantic Movement was the aversion with which many intellectuals viewed the destructive events that had arisen from the French Revolution, that in turn, had been inspired by some of the Enlightenment’s biggest proponents.⁶⁹ These sentiments were soon combined with an equal disquiet towards Europe’s emerging industrialization that was increasingly affecting the social and environmental landscape of its population. As a response, the Romantics turned to a pre-industrial vision of the past that, in their eyes, signified a simpler and more natural period of human history.⁷⁰ It was in this period of Romanticism and its idealization of antiquity that *Heimat* too became imbued with its own deep connotation with that of an original landscape. For an individual, this would equate to the landscape of his/her childhood and for the nation, the primordial landscape (*Urheimat*) of its earliest history. In either instance, the notion of *Heimat* is deeply associated with a period of innocence that has since been lost and to which one feels compelled to want to return, as a mythical wellspring of an original identity. In these terms, the romanticized *Heimat* represents the perception of a sheltered space, where the

⁶⁵ P. Blickle, *Heimat. A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. 2002. pp. 1, 6.; R. Koshar, “The Antinomies of *Heimat*: Homeland, History, Nazism.” *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland. The German Sense of Belonging*, J. Hermand & J. Steakley (ed.). 1996. p.113.

⁶⁶ E. Schütz, Berlin: “A Jewish *Heimat* at the Turn of the Century?”, *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland. The German Sense of Belonging*, J. Hermand & J. Steakley (ed.). 1996. p. 57.

⁶⁷ P. Blickle, *Heimat. A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. 2002. p. 1.

⁶⁸ M. Perry, *Western Civilization. A Brief History*. 1997. p. 365.

⁶⁹ M. Perry, *Western Civilization. A Brief History*. 1997. p. 364-365.; D. Kagan (et al), *The Western Heritage. Volume C, since 1789*.1987.p. 675.

⁷⁰ M. Perry, *Western Civilization. A Brief History*. 1997. p. 361-362.; P. Blickle, *Heimat. A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. 2002. p. 3.

sense of belonging is so great that the only true awareness of it can occur once part of it has been lost.⁷¹

The eventual transition that *Heimat* undertook, from a form of individual nostalgia and a local or at best regional identity, to that of a construct of German nationalism, occurred most notably towards the end of the nineteenth century. It was in the space of this transition that *Heimat* became subject to an inescapable irony in that, as author Peter Blickle relates, although it directly contributed towards the development of a nation-state, the idea of *Heimat* simultaneously embodied the very uneasiness with everything that accompanies such an ideology.⁷² In this vein, while both the growth of industry and politics resemble the antithesis of *Heimat*, both nevertheless continued to draw upon its emotive imagery as a source of rationalization and above all, national unity.⁷³

The origins of this apparent incongruity are commonly attributed to the work of the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) who, although he never directly used the concept of *Heimat* in his writings, is regarded by Blickle as the “intellectual father” of *Heimat*’s association to nationalism.⁷⁴ Amongst others, Herder supported ideas that initiated the connection between a nation or *Volk* and its culture as being the product of the country’s native geography and climate. In doing so, Herder precipitated a discourse that would subsequently develop into the *völkisch* (ethnic) ideology of the nationalist and National Socialist *Heimat*.⁷⁵ This connection between *Heimat* and *Volkstum* that had begun with Herder’s treatise was amply evident over the course of the later nineteenth century in the form of a renewed interest in German folklore, language and culture.⁷⁶ It was from within these increasingly popular connections, between what Herder referred to as the *Nationalgeist* (nation’s soul) and the landscape of its origins, that *Heimat* emerged as a central theme of pre-World War One nationalism in Wilhelmine Germany. Perhaps more than anything, the nationalistic idea of *Heimat* came to be characterized by the adoption of

⁷¹ P. Blickle, *Heimat. A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. 2002. p. 40, 55, 66, 70.

⁷² P. Blickle, *Heimat. A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. 2002. pp. 46, 48.

⁷³ R. Koshar, “The Antinomies of *Heimat*: Homeland, History, Nazism.” *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland. The German Sense of Belonging*, J. Hermand & J. Steakley (ed.). 1996. 113.

⁷⁴ P. Blickle, *Heimat. A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. 2002. p. 56.

⁷⁵ P. Blickle, *Heimat. A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. 2002. pp. 51-56.

⁷⁶ M. Perry, *Western Civilization. A Brief History*. 1997. p. 369.

a collective image of belonging, whereby *Heimat* became *Deutschland* and its immediate family grew into the greater ethnic *Volksgemeinschaft* (volk community).⁷⁷

At a time when Germany was emerging from the peak of its industrial growth, this awareness of a collective responsibility towards the preservation of *Heimat* also saw the establishment of a *Heimatschutz* (Heimat protection) movement that was aimed at “maintaining all of Germany’s ordinary working landscapes”.⁷⁸ By the time of the First World War, this movement had grown to encompass a perception of *Heimat* that extended well beyond Germany’s natural surroundings by equating its preservation to that of the preservation of German culture, and ever increasingly, to that of the racial concept of the German *Volk*.⁷⁹ It was not until the advent of Nazi Germany, however, that the *Heimat* genre became fully racialized through its extensive use in National Socialist propaganda. Here, drawing upon aspects of Romanticism’s idealization of nature and the belief in the ethnic and cultural “authenticity” of the German peasantry, Nazism promoted its cult of racial belonging with slogans such as that of its Ministry of Agriculture, *Blut und Boden* (Blood and Earth).⁸⁰

In spite of the notable stigma that *Heimat* received following its appropriation in the Nazi era, it was one of the few terms to emerge relatively unscathed into the period of post-war German media and literature. One explanation for its continued influence in the broader scope of German society is its fundamental allusion to innocence and the way in which *Heimat* always looks back to a time (genesis) without conflict.⁸¹ In this respect, *Heimat* successfully represents the spatial construct of a German identity, where geography ultimately serves as a point of reference towards the home of an individual’s memory and where it can perhaps be most accurately said that *Heimat* is where the heart is.

For the purposes of this dissertation *Heimat* and *Deutschtum* both represent an ideal framework within which to conduct the analysis of the South African German community of

⁷⁷ R. Koshar, “The Antinomies of *Heimat*: Homeland, History, Nazism.” *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland. The German Sense of Belonging*, J. Hermand & J. Steakley (ed.). 1996. p. 119.; P. Blickle, *Heimat. A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. 2002. p. 42.

⁷⁸ W. Rollins, “The Early Heimatschutz Movement.” *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland. The German Sense of Belonging*, J. Hermand & J. Steakley (ed.). 1996.p 96.

⁷⁹ R. Koshar, “The Antinomies of *Heimat*: Homeland, History, Nazism.” *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland. The German Sense of Belonging*, J. Hermand & J. Steakley (ed.). 1996. 118.

⁸⁰ G. Craig, *The Germans*. 1984. p. 206.; H. Herwig, *Hammer or Anvil? Modern Germany 1648 – Present*. 1994. p. 292.

⁸¹ T. Rippey (et al), “West German Heimat Films of the 1950’s.” *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland. The German Sense of Belonging*, J. Hermand & J. Steakley (ed.). 1996. 144-145.

Kroondal, that will now proceed over the course of the remaining chapters. Here, the complexities that are inherent to both of these concepts are explored amidst the unique tensions that are created within the process of immigration; an event in which old loyalties are juxtaposed against new responsibilities and where the intricacies of belonging, loss and memory are ultimately combined in the establishment of a new *Heimat* and a new identity.

Chapter 4. *Demut und Treue*

Humility & Devotion

Vor 78 Jahren kamen die ersten deutschen Hermannsbürger Missionare durch diese Gegend, um in Bechuanaland mit ihrer Arbeit zu beginnen. Diesen und den anderen Missionaren, die den ersten folgten, ist es zu verdanken daß wir hier als Deutsche zusammen kommen können. Denn diese Männer waren es, die im fremden Lande darauf bedacht waren, Deutsch zu bleiben und ihre Kinder Deutsch zu erziehen...

It was 78 years ago that the first Hermannsburg missionaries traveled through this region in order to begin their work in Bechuanaland. It is thanks to these missionaries, and those who came after them, that we have the opportunity to assemble here today as Germans. For it was these men who consciously strove to remain German and to raise their children as Germans...

(Own translation)

Pastor J. von Zwiétring
Kroondal Deutscher Tag, 12 June 1935¹
(Kroondal German Day)

¹ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tag Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen – 1925 un 1940 bis 1950*. Krugersdorp. 1981. p. 70.

The story of Kroondal and its identity begins with the arrival of the Hermannsburg missionaries whose journey into the southern African interior laid the foundations for what was to become a distinct portrait of German immigration and settlement within Africa. Although it would be incorrect simply to equate the identity of the Hermannsburg Mission Society (HMS) to that of the early Kroondal Germans, much of the Mission's legacy continued to remain deeply embedded within the community and its consciousness. As a result, any investigation into the identity of the Kroondal community must first pause to take cognizance of the distinct identity of the HMS itself.

The Hermannsburg Mission Society, which arose during the mid-nineteenth century, can be seen as a distinct product of its time and the singular ideals of its founder Ludwig Harms. Under the pseudonym of *Bauernmission*, the Mission stood as an embodiment of Romanticism's reaction against the tide of "enlightened" rationalism that inherently challenged the legitimacy of both the church and the traditional rule of monarchs. Translated as "farmer" or "peasant mission", the word *Bauernmission* thereby represented an accurate expression of the notion of pre-industrial simplicity that depicted the past as a wholly more authentic and noble era than that of the mid nineteenth century. Accordingly, Ludwig Harms established the Mission with the view of offering predominantly rural and uneducated candidates the opportunity to enter into an evangelical calling. This venture stood in stark contrast to the then prevailing norm, whereby seminaries typically remained the sphere of an educational elite, both in terms of the financial standing and prior schooling that were necessary in order to complete the period of study.²

Although Harms himself was well educated, he remained sceptical of the weight that traditional seminaries placed upon the intellectual abilities of their students.³ In this vein, Harms remained firmly of the belief that the mission's success required both a sound theological schooling as well as the demonstration of a Christian lifestyle to its prospective congregants. The result was that the early HMS deployed a more rudimentary academic curriculum supplemented by a significant amount of manual work on the surrounding farmlands of the *Missionshof* (mission's estate).⁴ It was commonly expressed that Harms

² E. Lüdemann, (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburger Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. pp. 34, 54.

³ E. Lüdemann, (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburger Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. p. 39.

⁴ H. Harms, *Concern for the Unreached. Life and work of Louis Harms, founder of the Hermannsburg Mission*. 1999. p. 24.; E. Lüdemann, (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburger Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. p. 38.

expected his students to be as skilled with a pitchfork as they were with the words of a sermon, which he believed would make the Mission's message uniquely accessible to the predominantly rural societies of the African continent.⁵

The romanticized perspective of Harms' *Bauernmission* was also evident in the HMS's perception of Africans as "noble savages".⁶ In a distinct parallel to Tacitus' documentation of the favourable attributes of the Germanic tribes as being honest, chaste, loyal and brave, Harms conferred almost exactly the same qualities upon Africa's populations, while likewise bemoaning what he perceived as their essentially "uncivilized barbarity".⁷ Ironically, as was almost certainly the case with Tacitus and Germania, Harms had never visited Africa and his deductions were exclusively based upon the accounts of others.⁸ In the end, the burden of these assumptions was borne by his missionaries, who were led to understand that their commission of faith was inextricably linked to the cultural education of their congregants. Consequently, this "greater" commission⁹ would frequently serve to place the missionaries at odds with many of the communities they so fervently endeavoured to serve.¹⁰

Among the areas that provide the most important insights into the identity of the HMS is without a doubt, its fundamental adherence to the Lutheran confession and to the Hanoverian State Church.¹¹ Although Lutheranism had been prevalent throughout northern Germany since the Reformation in the sixteenth century, its nature had been anything but static as it repeatedly evolved in response to the changing eras of European history. Initially embracing a period of orthodoxy in which theologians formulated many of the

⁵ E. Lüdemann, (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburger Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. p. 55.

⁶ J. Warmbold, *Germania in Africa. Germany's Colonial Literature*. 1989. p. 19.

⁷ M. Kitchen, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Germany*. 2000. p. 9.; Lüdemann, E. A (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburger Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. p. 48.

⁸ H. Harms, *Concern for the Unreached. Life and work of Louis Harms, founder of the Hermannsburg Mission*. 1999. p. 32. 36.

⁹ The Great Commission is a central tenet of the Christian Church whereby the Apostles were instructed by Christ to carry his message throughout the world (Matthew 28: 16-20). The play on words that is used within this sentence by referring to a "greater" commission is to emphasize the conviction with which HMS not only sought to convert the African societies to the Christian faith, but to equally draw them into a westernized "Christian" culture.

¹⁰ F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsburger Mission im Spannungsfeld der Kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*. 1988. p. 30.; H. Voges, *Vision: Global Congregation. The Task in Southern Africa*. 2000. p. 23.

¹¹ E. Lüdemann, *Ludwig Harms. Grüße alle meine Kinder, die weißen und die schwarzen... Briefe eines Missionsdirektors nach Südafrika 1861-1865*. 1998. p. 35.; F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsburger Mission im Spannungsfeld der Kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*. 1988. p. 31.

denomination's core doctrines, the Lutheran Church next struggled in its response to the advent of rationalism in the mid to late eighteenth century. As a result, the Church initially experienced a substantial decline of its influence before being revived by the increasing public opposition to rational ideology that had surged in the wake of France's occupation of the German territories in 1806. By the time of the 1848 March Revolution and its aftermath, the effects of Romanticism together with a series of Lutheran revival movements had managed to entrench a markedly conservative outlook and state-bound loyalty in the main stream of Lutheran Churches. It followed that for many Germans, the protestant confession and Lutheranism in particular were not only regarded as a return to true orthodoxy for the Christian Church, but also as symbols of German nationalism in which Luther had managed to "(free) Germany from papist, that is Italian, cultural tyranny."¹²

It was at precisely this point, less than one year after the collapse of the 1848 liberal revolt, that Ludwig Harms founded his mission society in the small town of Hermannsburg. True to the context of his time, Harms and the Mission remained unshakably loyal to Hanover's royal family who in turn took a personal interest in the development of the HMS and even attended one of the ordination ceremonies in 1857.¹³ For Harms, this conservative devotion to the monarchy and the Lutheran Church was distinctly evident within his paternalistic and authoritarian administration of both the Hermannsburg parish and its Mission. Under his stewardship, the Seminary's candidates were effectively treated as surrogate children and expected to defer to his authority in all matters, including those of engagement and marriage.¹⁴ As it was, these were strictly prohibited for the duration of their schooling with the result that the newly ordained missionaries were often faced with the daunting prospect of finding a willing wife in the weeks before their departure to Africa.¹⁵ As such, it was also not uncommon for Harms to "match make" what he believed

¹² D. McKim, *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther*. 2003. p. 259.

¹³ J. Brammer, *Was der alte Missionshof erzählt. Ein Lebensbild des Betschuanenmissionars Wilhelm Behrens*. 1950. p. 13.; E. Lüdemann, (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburg Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. pp. 45.; F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsburg Mission im Spannungsfeld der Kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*. 1988. p. 34.

¹⁴ E. Lüdemann, *Ludwig Harms. Grüße alle meine Kinder, die weißen und die schwarzen... Briefe eines Missionsdirektors nach Südafrika 1861-1865*. 1998. p. 37.

¹⁵ E. Lüdemann, (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburg Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. pp. 42, 52-53.

to be suitable couples and he certainly expected all of his students to seek his approval for their prospective partners.¹⁶

This firm conviction regarding the suitable marriage of his missionaries also highlights the particular awareness with which Harms approached questions of ethnicity and culture in the HMS. It is reasonably evident from a number of sources that although Harms held a firm opinion on the matter of *Volkstum*, his sentiments were not a simple product of nationalist ideals but rather something more akin to a concept of a *Schöpfungsordnung*.¹⁷ Rendered into English, *Schöpfungsordnung* reads “the order of creation” that relates to a distinct Theo-centric worldview in which divine providence is perceived to be at work within a natural order of belonging. Among the best-known examples of such an idea is the often-quoted “divine right of kings” that in the case of Harms was clearly evidenced through his devotion to Hanover’s royal family.¹⁸ It is therefore not surprising that Harms’ concept of *Volkstum* (ethnicity) was drawn along similar lines, in which he viewed the unique ethnicity of national groups as specifically preordained by God and thereby, not open to either racial or cultural miscegenation.¹⁹ Yet, despite the clear emphasis that authors have endeavoured to place upon that of a *Schöpfungsordnung* in Harms’ notion of ethnicity, it is nevertheless hard not to see the basic tenets of national romanticism emerge from it. Like so many other nineteenth century scholars, Harms was an avid student of the German past and cannot but have been exposed to the growing awareness of a broader German nationalism. These convictions were thus imparted to the Hermannsburg missionaries, on whom it was impressed that their duty in Africa lay as representatives of both the Lutheran faith and German culture.²⁰ In an extract that has already been used in the first chapter of this dissertation, the departing missionaries were typically reminded to fulfill their ambassadorial role with the following words:

... to approach their duties as Lutherans, Germans and Hermannsburgers. They were to carry the Lutheran confession and the pure word of God to the heathens.

¹⁶ H. Harms, *Concern for the Unreached. Life and work of Louis Harms, founder of the Hermannsburg Mission*. 1999. p. 56.

¹⁷ W. Wickert, *Und die vögel des Himmels wohnen unter seinen Zweigen. Hundert Jahre Bauernmission in Südafrika*. 1949. p. 320.

¹⁸ F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsbürger Mission im Spannungsfeld der Kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*. 1988. p. 34.

¹⁹ W. Wickert, *Und die vögel des Himmels wohnen unter seinen Zweigen. Hundert Jahre Bauernmission in Südafrika*. 1949. p. 320.

²⁰ A. Leuschke, The Hermannsburg Mission Society in Natal and Zululand, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 58.

They were to treasure and maintain the German language and customs, and as Hermannsburgers, they were to be ready to tackle each task ahead of them with humility so that they would bear testimony to their faith, not only through their words but also through their actions.²¹ (Own translation)

To this end and in order to ensure that the missionaries remained conscious of these precepts, Harms instituted the HMS's motto as that of *Demut und Treue* (humility and devotion).²² In his analysis of letters that were written by Ludwig Harms to his mission's superintendent in Natal between 1861 and 1865, author Ernst-August Lüdemann summarizes the centrality that *Demut und Treue* held to Harms' conception of his mission: “*Demut*’ represented Harms’ belief in the willingness to serve others and the renouncement of any attempts of lordship (*Herrentum*). Whereas, with regard to ‘*Treue*’, Harms sought to express the determination with which his missionaries should remain faithful to the path that they had embarked upon, regardless of any hardship”.²³ For the missionaries entering into Africa from 1854 onwards, the fulfillment of these guiding principles was, however, met by a variety of challenging realities that need to be understood within the context of the HMS's outlook towards European colonialism.

From the outset, it is interesting to note that the HMS's perspective on Africa's rapid colonization by the European powers over the course of the nineteenth century can be seen to harbour an intriguing conflict. On the one hand, as the founder of the HMS, Ludwig Harms saw colonialism as “*Betrug und offener Raub*” (betrayal and blatant robbery). As such, he perceived that European exploitation was in the process of steadily depriving Africans of the development of their “true” identities that he believed could only be realized through the paternalistic guidance of the Christian mission. Such sentiments were, however, not universally shared throughout the HMS, as is evidenced by its first superintendent to Africa, August Hardeland. As a Rhenish missionary with previous experience in Borneo, Hardeland regarded colonial rule as a clear indication of “*Göttliche Zulassung*” (Divine sanction), which allowed missionaries to achieve a greater level of

²¹ J. Brammer, *Was der alte Missionshof erzählt. Ein Lebensbild des Betschuanenmissionars Wilhelm Behrens*, 1950, p. 14.

²² E. Lüdemann, *Ludwig Harms. “Grüsse alle meine Kinder, die weißen und die schwarzen...” Briefe eines Missionsdirektors nach Südafrika 1861-1865*. 1998. p. 36.

²³ E. Lüdemann, *Ludwig Harms. “Grüsse alle meine Kinder, die weißen und die schwarzen...” Briefe eines Missionsdirektors nach Südafrika 1861-1865*. 1998. p. 36.

influence upon previously resistant societies.²⁴ Along these lines, Hardeland's policy towards Africans remained markedly authoritarian, stating that, "even if you humble yourself towards them, they must always be aware that you are the *inkosi* (master)." To this effect he even encouraged the use of corporal punishment in cases of insubordination and maintained a firm emphasis on Africans' "*Erziehung zur Arbeit*" (grooming to work).²⁵ In many respects, the dichotomy between Harms and Hardeland embodies something of the unavoidable tension that existed between the idealistic foundations of the Mission on the one hand and the colonial reality of racial relations on the other. As such, while both men espoused the role of authority as a biblical concept that created no precedent for democracy, it might be argued that Harms represented the notion of paternalistic leadership whereas Hardeland personified the sanction of religious autocracy above that of pedagogy.²⁶

It is important to note that for most of the HMS missionaries who arrived in Natal over the course of the nineteenth century, the disembarkation in Durban harbour would have been their first experience of an environment outside that of northern Germany.²⁷ As such, the new missionaries were thrust into the immediate reality of colonial life that would find numerous ways of testing their resolve towards Harms' principles of *Treue* and *Demut*. One such individual, whose life portrays a particularly compelling example of the manner in which many of the Hermannsburg missionaries faced the overt challenges of their cultural and geographical isolation, is that of Missionary Ernst Wehrmann.

A man of humble origins, Ernst Wehrmann had arrived in Africa in 1866 following a lengthy period of studying at the Hermannsburg Seminary in northern Germany. Upon completing the last of his practical training at the mission station of Limao in the western region of the Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek, he and his newlywed wife, Marie Eleonore (born Helms), who had joined him from Germany a year later, set out to establish their own station at a

²⁴ H. Harms, *Concern for the Unreached. Life and work of Louis Harms, founder of the Hermannsburg Mission*. 1999. p. 51.; F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsburger Mission im Spannungsfeld der Kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*. 1988. pp. 34-35.

²⁵ F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsburger Mission im Spannungsfeld der Kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*. 1988. pp. 32-36.

²⁶ F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsburger Mission im Spannungsfeld der Kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*. 1988. pp. 32-36.

²⁷ H. Rudert (ed.), *Chronik der Station Kana: Missionar Hermann Wenhold*. 1997. p. 1.

place called *Thaba Lenong* or “mountain of the vultures” among the Barokologari house of the Kgatla people.²⁸

As was the practice of the HMS in the first decades after its inception, the missionaries were expected to be largely self-reliant with only a small stipend to assist them in procuring the barest necessities. To this end, the early missionaries were not only tasked with the Christian education of their congregants, but also with providing for the needs of their own families, which included building a house and tending a small farming operation as a means to supplement their subsistence.²⁹ After six years with the Barokologari, that included accompanying their relocation to Melorane, some sixty kilometres to the north-east, following a conflict with the neighbouring Bakewna chieftaincy, Missionary Wehrmann lost his wife Marie Eleonore to a lung infection. Laying her to rest at Melorane, the bereaved missionary was suddenly faced with the decision of how best to care for his four young children given that the closest neighbouring settlement, of fellow missionary, Christoph Schulenburg, lay some twelve hours journeying away.³⁰ It was in his response to these circumstances that Ernst Wehrmann demonstrated the commitment that he, like many of his fellow HMS missionaries, held towards Harms’ call to *Treue* and *Demut*.

It was, therefore, in the summer towards the end of 1878, that Missionary Wehrmann loaded the four children onto his ox-wagon and set out for the German settlement of New Hermannsburg in the Natal midlands, a journey of some 800 kilometres to the south-east. For the missionary, the reasons for his journey were abundantly clear; not only did his two eldest children, Heinrich and Dorothea, need to begin their schooling, but the widowed missionary was also in desperate need of a wife who would be able to support him in fulfilling his duty to his mission and be able to take on the role of a surrogate mother to his remaining children.³¹ In what can be regarded as a telling demonstration of his convictions, Missionary Wehrmann concluded that the long journey across the open veld and the

²⁸ J. S. Bergh (ed.), *Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die Vier Noordelike Provinsies*. 1998. p. 106.; H. Behrens & H. Wehrmann (ed), *Wehrmannstreffen. 150. Geburtstag des Missionars Ernst Friedrich Wehrmann, Wehrmannsruh. 22 & 23 Oktober 1983*. 1983. p. 3.

²⁹ H. Behrens & H. Wehrmann (ed), *Wehrmannstreffen. 150. Geburtstag des Missionars Ernst Friedrich Wehrmann, Wehrmannsruh. 22 & 23 Oktober 1983*. 1983. p. 3.; E. Lüdemann, (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburg Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. p. 42, 57.

³⁰ H. Behrens & H. Wehrmann (ed), *Wehrmannstreffen. 150. Geburtstag des Missionars Ernst Friedrich Wehrmann, Wehrmannsruh. 22 & 23 Oktober 1983*. 1983. p. 3.

³¹ H. Behrens & H. Wehrmann (ed), *Wehrmannstreffen. 150. Geburtstag des Missionars Ernst Friedrich Wehrmann, Wehrmannsruh. 22 & 23 Oktober 1983*. 1983. p. 3.

summer's swollen rivers, was the only available option in order to provide the children with a German education, as well as hopefully, a German mother.

In order to understand the decision that prompted Missionary Wehrmann to undertake this journey, it is important briefly to consider the choices that were open to him. The closest school to the mission station Melorane was in fact the newly built *Morgensonne* (morning-sun) boarding school that had been erected by seven of the region's nineteen HMS missionaries to address precisely the problem that Missionary Wehrmann now faced in providing a suitable education for his children. The school, which was situated close to the Region's principle town of Rustenburg, had been built on the farm *Morgenzon* that, along with the materials for the school, had to be procured by the missionaries for a combined total of 8000 Rand. Considering that each of the Hermannsburg missionaries only received an annual amount of 120 Rand it is certainly not surprising that only seven of the district's nineteen missionaries managed to contribute to the founding of the school that eventually managed to open its doors in January 1876. For Missionary Wehrmann, the *Morgensonne* school was undoubtedly his most accessible option, lying a little over one hundred kilometres to the south east of Melorane.³² It therefore needs to be asked why the missionary nevertheless chose to travel the eight hundred kilometres to the HMS's founding station of New-Hermannsburg? The most plausible explanation is given by a combination of factors, beginning with the financial cost that Missionary Wehrmann would still have to incur in committing himself to *Morgensonne*. As a private initiative of the Transvaal missionaries, *Morgensonne* is notable for not having been subsidized by the HMS. As such, all the funding for its upkeep and a teacher's salary needed to be provided by the missionaries themselves, expenses that would not be necessary for enrolling his children in the HMS's school at New-Hermannsburg.³³ Added to this was the fact that over the first years of its inception, *Morgensonne* suffered a series of crises through the loss of a number of teachers to other less isolated and altogether more lucrative positions in the country. When seen together, these financial and logistical obstacles, along with the scant opportunities of finding a willing wife, almost certainly persuaded Missionary Wehrmann to undertake the arduous journey to Natal.³⁴

³² H. Pape, '*Morgensonne*' 1876 - 1976. 1976. pp. 1, 4-5.

³³ H. Stäcker & H. Behrens (ed.), *Festschrift 100 Jahre Muhls in Südafrika*. 1983. p. 15.

³⁴ H. Pape, '*Morgensonne*' 1876 - 1976. 1976. pp. 1, 4-5.; H. Behrens & H. Wehrmann (ed), *Wehrmannstreffen. 150. Geburtstag des Missionars Ernst Friedrich Wehrmann, Wehrmannsruh. 22 & 23 Oktober 1983*. 1983. pp. 3-4.

Upon arriving in New-Hermansburg in January 1879, Missionary Wehrmann first delivered his eldest children to the school whereupon he was informed by the wife of the then Mission's Superintendent, Karl Hohls, that she indeed knew of an eligible German woman in the nearby settlement of New-Hanover. The woman in question was twenty year old Marie Schlaphoff who together with her father and younger sister, had journeyed to the Natal Colony in 1868 as settlers linked to the HMS. Having lost her mother at age seven, Marie had endured a particularly hard childhood on their farm outside New-Hanover, in which she, as a ten year old girl, had been given the responsibility both of tending to the household and caring for her younger sister. It was, then, ten years later that her father, Heinrich Schlaphoff, received a letter from *Frau* Hohls explaining the predicament of Missionary Wehrmann and asking whether he would consent to giving the widowed missionary Marie's hand in marriage. According to the source, *Frau* Hohls had in fact considered Marie to be a suitable bride for her own son, but given Missionary Wehrmann's dire circumstances she had concluded that precedence should indeed be given to the missionary's immediate needs. As it turned out, it did not take long before *Herr* Schlaphoff duly replied that it would not be possible to provide an answer without first having at least met the man who at best was only a few years younger than he himself. Therefore, with little time to waste, Missionary Wehrmann promptly set out to introduce himself to the Schlaphoff family, in what can only be imagined must have begun as a fairly awkward encounter.³⁵

When Missionary Wehrmann arrived on the Schlaphoff farm, the family had just returned from a trip to Pietermaritzburg and while he was becoming acquainted with *Herr* Schlaphoff, Marie took the time quickly to change out of her dusty clothes and freshen up after her journey. After the introduction between the two had finally been concluded, Marie simply asked for an hour during which time to be alone in order to pray about her decision. At the end of the hour, which she had spent walking in the veld behind the house and after reassuring her father, she consented to marry the missionary whom she had only just met and with whom she would then embark upon an uncertain future in the isolated African interior.³⁶

³⁵ H. Behrens & H. Wehrmann (ed), *Wehrmannstreffen. 150. Geburtstag des Missionars Ernst Friedrich Wehrmann, Wehrmannsruh. 22 & 23 Oktober 1983*. 1983. pp. 3, 6-7.

³⁶ H. Behrens & H. Wehrmann (ed), *Wehrmannstreffen. 150. Geburtstag des Missionars Ernst Friedrich Wehrmann, Wehrmannsruh. 22 & 23 Oktober 1983*. 1983. pp. 3, 6-7.

When seen from a modern perspective it is certainly difficult to understand the reasoning behind Marie Schlaphoff's decision to agree to a marriage that was based upon neither romance nor convenience. Yet, it is quite possibly the subjugation of reason to a conscious notion of duty and religious faith that would provide the necessary perspective with which to understand her decision. In this sense, even though romance was not a determining factor in the couple's engagement, the pervasive influence of the HMS's Romanticism could not but have served to direct her judgment towards what she might have regarded as the fulfillment of her duty in accordance with her faith. It was therefore, after a hastily arranged wedding, less than a month after first having laid eyes on each other, that the new missionary couple set out for the distant mission station of Melorane.

The story of Ernst and Marie Wehrmann, who went on to have thirteen children of their own, is without a doubt an extraordinary example of the determination with which the HMS missionaries strove to overcome the challenges of both the physical and cultural isolation that they encountered in their adopted land. Yet, at the same time, it is important to note that this conviction towards the preservation of a culturally German identity was by no means unique to the individuals of the Hermannsburg Mission Society. Since Germany's unification in 1871 and the subsequent rapid acquisition of its own colonial empire, the nature of German immigration too, became imbued with an increasing awareness of that of a German national identity. As a result, German immigration in the latter part of the nineteenth century became infused with a distinct sense of responsibility to its role as a global advocate for the supposed German "virtues" of *Deutschtum*. One author who provides a fitting interpretation to this development within German colonialism is Daniel Walther in the book, *Creating Germans Abroad*:

In a sense, (German) colonial women, and men, were "forced onto a stage" (whereby) they constantly had to demonstrate their "superiority" and present themselves as rulers in front of the native population. In this regard, they had little control over their lives. Like their counterparts in other European colonies, the conditions of the regime forced them to be constantly aware of their behavior and not do anything that might jeopardize white rule.³⁷

³⁷ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 52.

Although Walther's description pertains to the racial relations within the German colony of South West Africa, it is possible to argue that the "stage" of idealized German superiority was not solely the product of an interaction between German immigrants and "native" African cultures, but one that has equal relevance to the varied array of European cultures that German colonists encountered in the broader sphere of colonial life.

As such, German settlers were expected to represent the idealized notion of *Deutschtum* in every aspect of their lives and thereby become the manifest example of Germany's new national identity.³⁸ In this manner it was hoped that colonialism might become "a vehicle (with which) to unite the nation",³⁹ that despite its political merger in 1871, still suffered from the absence of a common identity. It was, therefore, not surprising that under Prussian political leadership, German colonial authorities adopted a similarly north German notion of Germanness through which it hoped to foster its imperial ambitions. As Walther relates, "to be German meant to behave in a certain way: (to) work hard, be prosperous, maintain German traditions (linguistic and cultural), and preserve racial distinctions." These characteristics were then translated into the distinct vision of *Deutschtum* that was to be represented by,

...a hard-working, parsimonious, Protestant agrarian class filled with staunch nationalist values and devotion to the emperor, with the "traditional" German family at the core of society. It was a decidedly preindustrial vision of Germany pursued by the educated and propertied members of the middle *Stand*.⁴⁰

This image of colonial Germanness was markedly similar to that which had been instilled in the HMS by the comparable north German heritage of Ludwig Harms, some twenty years prior to the creation of Germany's colonial Empire. As such, the description of a preindustrial "Protestant agrarian class" appears to fulfill the same romantic notion to that of the HMS's *Bauernmission*, as too do its shared devotion to culturally German values and family. Even though Walther attributes these ideals to having originated from the educated German middle *Stand* (class), it is important to realize that Harms himself formed part of this *Stand* and that regardless of his candidates' humble origins, their education in the Hermannsburg *Missionshaus* (Seminary) would have imbued them with

³⁸ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 2.

³⁹ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 12.

⁴⁰ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 2.

these same ideals.⁴¹ And yet, despite these many and obvious similarities, the character of German colonialism, nevertheless, fails to capture the depth of religious conviction that ultimately separates the identity of the HMS from that of secular German immigration.⁴² In this vein, even though Germany's Colonial administration endorsed the practice of Christian protestantism as a defining attribute in its notion of *Deutschtum*, its inclusion can probably be seen to be less indicative of an attempt at spirituality than it was as a symbol of German national determination. For the HMS, it was this dual conviction of the importance of both an evangelical calling and the retention of its cultural practices that set it apart from the identity of other German immigrants of that same period.

⁴¹ E. Lüdemann, (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburger Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. p. 35.

⁴² The unification of Germany in 1871 under the leadership of Prussian chancellor Otto von Bismarck was initially, not well received by the Hermannsburg Mission Society who, apart from having objected to the Prussian annexation of the Kingdom of Hanover in 1866, next resisted Bismarck's efforts to regulate Germany's Lutheran churches through the formation of a unified *Landeskirche* (State-Church). This *Kulturkampf* (Battle over culture), as it became known, was also largely aimed at minimizing the social and political influence of the Catholic Church within Germany and established state-run schooling as well as civil marriages towards which the then leadership of the HMS strongly objected. The death of Theodor Harms in 1885, however, constituted a change in the HMS's policy towards the unified Germany as it undertook to support the colonial policies of Kaiser Wilhelm II and the ideals of German nationalism. - E. Lüdemann, (ed.), *Vision: Gemeinde weltweit. 150 Jahre hermannsburger Mission und Ev.-luth. Missionswerk in Niedersachsen*. 2000. pp. 59-70, 79.; D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 1.

Chapter 5. *Das Heimatrecht zu Erwerben*

Earning the right to belong

The notion of belonging is undeniably one of the most central aspects in any form of identity – whether it is found in the experience of shared culture or in the composition of a familiar landscape, it always presents the fundamental allure of acceptance. And yet, this imagery is markedly different to that which is evoked by the notion of the “right to belong”. Where a sense of “belonging” can be prompted through an encounter with something familiar or a moment of hospitality, “the right to belong” tends to draw upon something stronger and most importantly self-evident. When this phrase, “the right to belong”, is taken yet another step further, by adding the prefix “earning” to “the right to belong”, it draws upon the additional awareness of time and events as prerequisites in developing the notion of unquestioned belonging. The result is a phrase that not only serves as a subtle reminder of the fact that identity remains the product of a process of construction, but also as one that presents an ideal vehicle with which to journey into the experience of immigrant identity.

It is in this context of identity that this chapter’s German title, *Das Heimatrecht zu Erwerben*, is foremostly interpreted as “Earning the right to belong”. In a literal sense, the translation of *Heimatrecht* could be “the right of domicile” where domicile is defined as “a dwelling place, abode” or “one’s legally recognized place of residence”.¹ This legal representation of *Heimatrecht* stems back to the beginning of the nineteenth century when the Kingdom of Bavaria instituted its use as an early form of the modern notion of citizenship. Yet, in acknowledging the conceptual depth that remains inherent to all forms of *Heimat*, the reading of *Heimatrecht* can and should be open to the interpretative translation that equates *Heimat* to belonging and as such, engenders the phrase “earning the right to belong”. When this is placed in the narrative of Kroondal, the descriptive title of *Das Heimatrecht zu Erwerben*, is not only aimed at capturing the immigrant’s progression to the right “to reside” in their adopted land, but further, seeks to evoke the more intimate odyssey, whereby they came “to identify” with a new *Heimat*.

¹ C. Applegate, *A nation of provincials: the German idea of Heimat*. 1990. p. 8.; W. Geddie, *Chambers’s Twentieth Century Dictionary*. 1970. p. 313.; H. Betteridge, *Cassell’s German – English Dictionary*. 1981. p. 299.

The intention of this chapter is to investigate the unique spatial awareness that arose in the community of Kroondal, from its beginnings in the map of Hermannsburg Mission stations in the western Transvaal, to the realization of the settlement as a distinct form of German identity. In doing so it is, nevertheless, important to state that although the approach to this chapter (as well as the chapter that is to follow) is based upon the chronological narrative of the settlement, it is certainly not the intention in this dissertation to offer a comprehensive appraisal of the story of Kroondal. Instead, this investigation employs a relatively selective use of those chronologies of certain individuals that can be found in a number of existing sources² in order to focus its attention upon those aspects that best illustrate the distinct nature of Kroondal's identity as a German-South African settlement. As such, Chapter 5 aims to speak of a community's growing association with their environment, both through the willful construction and naming of a space and also through the events of suffering and loss and how each ultimately points to the gradual process of belonging.

The newly wed missionary couple, Ernst and Marie Wehrmann, arrived at the Hermannsburg Mission Station of Melorane in the autumn of 1879. Far from being a gentle introduction to married life, having completed the arduous journey from Natal, the young Marie Wehrmann was confronted with the isolated frontier of the Marico District on the western boundary of the Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR). As a water-scarce region with only seasonal rain and sporadic outbreaks of malaria, the western Bushveld, in which Melorane lay situated, was seemingly besieged by nature and most especially loneliness for the new twenty-year-old step-mother, whose predecessor lay buried close to the family homestead. It was in this environment that Marie gave birth to the first of what would be thirteen children of her own, and yet a mere three days after Christoph Wehrmann had been delivered into the world, the young infant died, as would three more of her children over the course of the next twenty-one years.³ Of the many diseases that plagued the inhabitants of the lower-lying Bushveld region, it was malaria that remained most rampant and debilitating to the population who were still largely defenceless against its attacks. Then, after 4 years at Melorane, Missionary Wehrmann received the news that he was to

² See Chapter 2

³ In total Marie Wehrmann lost six of her children in her lifetime, five in childhood and the sixth as an adult.

relocate to the HMS station of Manuane, some 75 kilometres to the south-west, where the resident missionary, Johann Tönsing, had died following a protracted illness.⁴

When contrasted to Melorane, the Hermannsburg Mission station of Manuane was situated within an idyllic niche along the slopes of one of the region's elevated landmarks that formed part of a series of hills trailing out of the range of Magaliesberg mountains from the east.⁵ It was here that Ernst and Marie Wehrmann took up residence and took over the station from the widowed *Frau* Tönsing and her ten children, five of whom were from Missionary Tönsing's first wife, who had similarly succumbed to illness (most likely malaria) seven years prior to her husband's death in 1882. A narrator describes the widow's plight in one of the family's histories,

*...Ihr blühte das Los jeder Missionswitwe, die Station zu räumen, eine Heimat zu suchen. So zog sie nach dem unweit gelegenen (immerhin 50km) Hermanskraal, einem völlig unbebauten Platz. Nicht das simpelste Obdach stand ihr zur Verfügung, darin sie Schutz hätte finden können gegen Sonne, Wind und Regen. Ihr Ochsenwagen unter einem grossen Baume war der einzige Zufluchtsort.*⁶

Her lot was the same as that of all the mission's widows, namely to vacate the station and to find herself a *Heimat*. So she journeyed to the nearby (nonetheless 50 kilometer distant) Hermanskraal that, as a totally undeveloped piece of land, did not even provide the simplest shelter with which to offer her protection against sun, wind and rain. The only available refuge to be found was in her ox-wagon under a large tree. (Own translation)

The farm of Hermanskraal had been purchased by Missionary Tönsing in 1875 and now offered his widow the opportunity to support herself along with the host of children that were in her care. After a difficult beginning and with the support of the surrounding missionaries, the family managed to establish itself on the property that by 1887 had grown into a small settlement as more young Germans from the immediate area began to gravitate towards it. In a pattern that was becoming a hallmark of the HMS in southern

⁴ H. Behrens & H. Wehrmann (ed.), *Wehrmannstreffen. 150. Geburtstag des Missionars Ernst Friedrich Wehrmann, Wehrmannsruh. 22 & 23 Oktober 1983*. 1983. pp. 3-4.; H. Stäcker & H. Behrens (ed.), *Festschrift 100 Jahre Muhls in Südafrika*. 1983. p. 14.

⁵ J. S. Bergh (ed.), *Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die Vier Noordelike Provinsies*. 1998. p. 4.

⁶ H. Stäcker & H. Behrens (ed.), *Festschrift 100 Jahre Muhls in Südafrika*. 1983. p. 15.

Africa, the strong cultural awareness that was maintained by the Hermannsburg missionaries and their families often became a rallying point for other Germans within those regions, as author Hidemarie Grünewald describes,

Louis Harms selbst hatte seinen Missionaren tadelnd mitgeteilt daß es “eine deutsche Unart” sei “sich und seine Sprache so wegzuwerfen wenn man mit Ausländern zu tun hat”...Die Missionshäuser der Hermannsburger galten in der Folgezeit deshalb immer auch als Mittelpunkt deutscher Kultur und Sitte.⁷

Louis Harms himself admonished his missionaries by reminding them that it was “un-German” to “carelessly relinquish one’s own language through interaction with other cultures”...As a result, the Hermannsburg missions invariably become centre-points of German culture and customs. (Own translation)

Such trends had already become evident among many of the more established Hermannsburg mission stations in the Natal Colony where German settlers, who Harms had envisaged would accompany and support the HMS missionaries, soon began to form their own settlements in those regions. Added to this was the fact that, as the Hermannsburg missionaries’ own families began to grow and mature, many of their children were not drawn to following the same calling as that of their fathers and instead sought opportunities to establish themselves outside the HMS. The result was that by 1882 the Natal Colony had become dotted with a number of German settlements which, although they drew direct connections to the HMS, were nevertheless largely independent of its institutions. Names in the South African landscape such as Lüneburg, Marburg, Bergen, Wittenberg, Braunschweig and Wartburg are all examples of German farming communities that owed their collective origins to the Hermannsburg missionaries.⁸ It was, therefore, not surprising when in 1889, two years after the establishment of the little community of Hermanskraal, another German settlement began to take shape, however, this time on the farm of Kroondal, a little over one hundred and fifty kilometres to the south-east of the Manuane mission station.⁹

⁷ M. Grünewald, *Die Geschichte der Deutschen in Südafrika*. 1993. p. 69.

⁸ M. Grünewald, *Die Geschichte der Deutschen in Südafrika*. 1993. p. 69.

⁹ H. Stäcker & H. Behrens (ed.), *Festschrift 100 Jahre Muhls in Südafrika*. 1983. p. 16.

The Kroondal farm, which lies situated beneath the dominant backdrop of the Magaliesberg mountains and the extensive mineral rich plains that extend to the north, encompasses a total acreage of approximately three thousand morgen or twenty-five square kilometres.¹⁰ As was described in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, the farm had originally been procured in trust by the Hermannsburg Missionary, Christian Müller, in an attempt to resettle a group of his congregants from the Baphalane tribe to a more temperate region than that of their malaria rife location of Ramakokstad, one hundred kilometres north of Rustenburg. However, following the collapse of this initiative due to the opposition of the ZAR government and the inability of the Baphalane congregation to service the financial installments on the property, a group of five Hermannsburg missionaries, that included Missionary Müller and two German settlers, decided to purchase the farm as the basis of a German community which they hoped to establish on the site.¹¹ It followed that in 1889, once the deeds to the property had been secured, the new owners and most especially their sons for whom the investment had primarily been made, wasted little time in setting to work in order to fulfill their vision of an *Ortschaft* - the German term used to describe a small settlement or village.

The physical layout of the *Ortschaft* Kroondal, which the settlement's founders strove to model upon the configuration of a German feudal hamlet, presents an interesting window into the identity of the first generation of Kroondal's inhabitants. Yet, before proceeding to investigate the nature of its actual arrangement, it is important to take some cognizance of the farming landscape as it existed throughout much of the ZAR towards the end of the nineteenth century. By the time of Kroondal's inception in 1889 the Transvaal, as the ZAR was generally known, was largely consolidated under the ownership of 'Boer' landlords who had acquired their estates in the aftermath of the "Great Trek" of the 1840's.¹² However, in spite of the vast expanse of agricultural land that now formed part of this newly established gentry, the majority of the white landlords commonly lacked the capital, if not at times the interest, to undertake its cultivation. The result was the development of a widespread system of sharecropping in which the Boer landlords frequently entered into an agreement with Black tenants whose lease allowed them to live upon and farm the land in return for providing the landlord with a proportional share of their harvest.¹³ It was

¹⁰ J. S. Bergh (ed.), *Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die Vier Noordelike Provinsies*. 1998. p. 88.

¹¹ L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*, 1992, pp. 235-236.

¹² R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*. 2000. p 49.

¹³ C. van Onselen, *The Seed is Mine. The Life of Kas Maine, A South African Sharecropper 1894-1985*. 1997. pp. 5-6.

according to this system, in which the demographics of ownership lay firmly within the bounds of the region's ruling minority (as was the case throughout most of colonial Africa), that agriculture in the Transvaal had become characterized by the relative isolation of white family homesteads across hundreds if not thousands of hectares of open farmland.

For the owners of Kroondal, this extensive system of colonial farming did not, however, offer an acceptable vision of German cultural cohesion that would enable them to secure the identity of successive generations of their descendants. After years of living in the seclusion of their far-flung mission stations throughout the western Transvaal, the Hermannsburg missionaries were only too aware of the need for a closely knit community that might arrest the otherwise inevitable assimilation of their families. Ultimately, it was this same sense of devotion or *Treue* towards their cultural heritage that had already prompted a similar group of the region's Hermannsburg Missionaries to undertake the creation of the *Morgensonne* school in 1876, as a means of furthering the German education of their children (as was discussed in Chapter 4). Therefore, it was not surprising when thirteen years later, this same generation of missionaries once again sought a solution that would help to secure their children's cultural identity into adulthood.

True to these intentions and following a general survey of the property by another German immigrant, the *Landmesser* (land-surveyor) Ernst Muhl, it was determined that the farm would be able to support a total of eleven individual families. According to this arrangement, each of these families was first assigned to one of a parallel *Gehöfte* (plots) that were all neatly positioned along the main road that dissected the farm. As such, each *Hof* (plot) was not only envisaged as the site for the family home, but was also intended to serve as a convenient means of providing the owner with crops of fruit and vegetables to supplement his household resources. It was through the establishment of this residential section of the farm, and as such the Kroondal *Ortschaft*, that the remainder and bulk of the farm's irrigable land was thereafter similarly apportioned into a range of eleven, larger *Äcker* (fields) that could all receive adequate water from the nearby Sandspruit stream and the larger Hex River.¹⁴

The result of this arrangement was that unlike the general landscape of the Western Transvaal, the inhabitants of Kroondal chose to adopt a relatively intensive and above-all

¹⁴ H. Behrens & I. Behrens. *Die Siedlung Kroondal. 100 Jahre 1889-1989. Festschrift zum Jubiläumsfeier am 4. November 1989.* 1989. p. 14.

co-operative utilization of their farm. It was a system of farming and settlement that had been the hallmark of the European peasantry in which each family's farmlands extended out from the semi-nucleus of a town.¹⁵ While both the operation of Kroondal and the widespread practice of sharecropping throughout the ZAR maintain an interesting parallel to these methods of medieval agriculture, it is increasingly obvious that the creation of the Kroondal *Ortschaft* was far less a function of economic convenience than it was a concerted drive towards the preservation of its cultural identity.

When these circumstances are viewed within the broader context of immigrant communities across the world the establishment of the German community of Kroondal represents only one of hundreds, if not thousands, of similar examples in which immigrants of various nationalities choose to live within such cultural enclaves. These communities, that are commonly associated with names such as "China Town", "Little Italy" or "New Germany", were generally developed in the desire to replicate life as it had been in the "old world".¹⁶ While this was certainly the case for the community of Kroondal in which its inhabitants strove to retain the cultural link to their German heritage, the temptation and convenience to label its community as a, "little Germany", would ultimately serve to belie the much more specific nature that its identity entailed. As has been discussed in chapter 3 of this dissertation, the idea of being German, and as such Germanness, is something that remains inherently elusive. This notion is fittingly expressed in the phrase "A Nation of Provincials", in which its author, Celia Applegate, chooses to address the many regional divisions that exist as part of a greater German identity.¹⁷ It is, therefore, in this vein that the development of the Kroondal settlement too becomes far more accessible when it is not viewed through the generic lens of Germanness, but rather when it is seen within the more specific context of its origins as that of a "little Hermannsburg".

The original vision of the HMS's founder and director, Ludwig Harms, was to establish a progressive foothold of self-contained German-Lutheran villages in Africa that could support his missionaries while simultaneously providing a practical example of a Christian (German) lifestyle to its new congregations. It was a model of evangelism that Harms had

¹⁵ R. Otto. Honderd Jaar Kroondal, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 131.

¹⁶ M. Ember, C. Ember & I. Skoggard (ed), *Encyclopedia of Diasporas. Immigrant and Refugee Cultures Around the World. Volume 2*. X. Li & J. Lee, *Chinese in Canada*. p. 649., V. Pagliai, *Italians in the United States*. p. 887.

¹⁷ C. Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials - The German Idea of Heimat*. 1990.

borrowed from the Christianization of Germany by Irish and Anglo-Saxon monks, sometime after the sixth century (that is commonly referred to as the Hiberno-Scottish Mission or *Schottenklöster* in German). According to this idea, Harms envisaged that the Hermannsburg Missionaries would found an independent settlement in the African interior through which they could then evangelize the local population. With this settlement in place, the same group of missionaries would then venture a little bit further where they would create a similar outpost. At the same time, a new group of missionaries from Germany would arrive to take over the original settlement and to learn the local language until they too were ready to create a settlement of their own.¹⁸ The implementation of this idea can be seen quite clearly in the HMS's beginnings in Natal with the purchase of the farm "Perseverance" in 1855 that was soon renamed "New Hermannsburg". It was here that the original group of missionaries and settlers constructed a large *Missionshaus* (Mission House) in the same style as the manor houses of northern Germany, which then became the staging point for the Society's operations into the interior.¹⁹

Although the development of the New Hermannsburg mission station, that was situated on the Zululand border, essentially adhered to Harms' vision of communal settlement, the realities and political complexity of colonial Africa soon resulted in individual missionaries striking out on their own. Of the biggest factors that precipitated the gradual departure from the HMS's policy of communal settlements, was the role that missionaries (in general) had come to assume in the mediation between European colonists and African societies. As has already been discussed (in Chapter 1) it was such a call to mediation from the ZAR government, on behalf of the Batswana chieftain Setshele, that resulted in a group of Hermannsburg missionaries setting out into the territories of the western Transvaal and Bechuanaland.²⁰ It was with this call and the subsequently increasing demand to cater for as wide a population as possible, that the Hermannsburg missionaries therefore decided to forgo the original concept of communal settlement in favour of establishing individual and thus frequently isolated mission stations throughout the region. With this association in mind, it is perhaps hardly surprising to find that the founders of Kroondal strove to model their settlement upon what they would have essentially considered to be part of their

¹⁸ H. Harms, *Concern for the Unreached: Life and Work of Louis Harms Founder of the Hermannsburg Mission*. 1999. p. 31.

¹⁹ A. Leuschke, The Hermannsburg Mission Society in Natal and Zululand, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, pp. 56-57.

²⁰ F. Hasselhorn, *Bauernmission in Südafrika. Die Hermannsbürger Mission im Spannungsfeld der kolonialpolitik 1890-1939*, 1986, p. 42.

original calling. In this sense, the creation of a traditionally German system of farming and communal settlement on the Kroondal farm can certainly be considered as something of an attempt to reconnect to Harms' original vision for his mission as a self contained German-Lutheran *Ortschaft* in Africa.

One of the best examples that demonstrates the centrality that was afforded to the HMS by the community of Kroondal can be seen in the *Ortschaft's* founding charter or *Stiftungsurkunde* as it is known in German.

Im Namen der heiligen Dreieinigkeit. Amen

(In the name of the Holy Trinity. Amen)

1. The **KROONDAL** congregation is and will continue to be Evangelical Lutheran.
2. As such, the norms and guiding principles that will govern the congregation's tenets and their lives will be in accordance with the Sacred Text, Old - and New Testaments, divinely inspired and therefore God's word.
3. The congregation stands steadfastly bound to the Lutheran Confession, as it is represented by: the Apostles', Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds, the Augsburg Confession, Luther's Small and Large Catechism, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Formula of Concord.
4. The congregation is founded in close connection with the Hermannsburg Mission in the firm hope that it and its representatives will sustain the congregation with the Gospel.
5. The congregation expects that the Superintendent of the Hermannsburg Mission in South Africa will undertake a yearly visit to the Church and School. The congregation will ensure that the traveling costs will be reimbursed.
6. Any disagreement between the Pastor and the congregation, serious transgressions in church regulations and difficult questions pertaining to marriage

will be referred to the Mission's Superintendent; The final decision on all these matters rests with the Mission's Directorate in Germany.

7. The community of Kroondal, or the owners of Kroondal will provide the congregation, at no extra cost, with the allocated land for the building of the church as well as the adjoining erf that is to be used for the church and the school, as long as the congregation is Evangelical Lutheran.

8. The community of Kroondal pledges to provide the out-lying members of the congregation with an encampment and grazing for their draft animals for the duration of their visits pertaining to church matters.

9. The compilation of a congregational charter will be undertaken once the congregation has secured the services of a pastor.²¹ (Own translation)

What is remarkable about this charter is that the development of the Kroondal *Ortschaft* was undertaken as a completely private initiative by its founders and, as such, it did not receive any financial support from the HMS. And yet, when considering that five of the original seven investors in the Kroondal farm were still active missionaries in the service of the Hermannsburg Mission, it is perhaps not surprising that the development of the *Stiftungsurkunde* went to such lengths to ensure Kroondal's affiliation to the Society. All in all, it appears that the settlement's "founding fathers" were certainly determined to leave nothing to chance in ensuring the continuation of their descendant's spiritual and cultural heritage. One of the best expressions of this conviction can be seen in a quote from one of these descendants, a man called Werner Backeberg, some sixty years later:

Als unsere Väter nach hier kamen, brachten sie als herrlichen Schatz das Evangelium der Gnade in Christo Jesu mit, wie es uns durch Martin Luther wiedergeschenkt ist. Diesen Schatz lauter und rein ihren Kindern zu erhalten, war ihnen heilige Pflicht. Bibel, Katechismus und Gesangbuch waren die Quellen, aus

²¹ H. Behrens & I. Behrens. *Die Siedlung Kroondal. 100 Jahre 1889-1989. Festschrift zum Jubiläumsfeier am 4. November 1989.* 1989. p. 83.

*denen sie schöpften; Kirche, Schule und Haus die Stätten, wo sie daraus lehrten und lebten.*²²

*Der zweite Schatz war ihre deutsche Volksart, an der sie mit großer Treue hingen. Es gehört zur lutherischen Glaubenshaltung, daß sie in ihrem Volkstum etwas Gottgegebenes sahen. Gottes Schöpferwille hatte sie in ihr Volk gestellt, als dessen sie nun Gott dienten auf dem Platz, der ihnen angewiesen war. Aus dieser Bindung heraus hielten sie fest an ihrer Muttersprache, an deutscher Sitte und deutschem Brauchtum. Lutherischer Glaube und deutsches Volkstum, das ist (das) Erbe...*²³

When our fathers first arrived here they brought with them a wonderful treasure in the form of the Evangelical Gospel of grace that is found within Jesus Christ, as it had, in turn, been given to them by Martin Luther. The task of retaining this treasure for their children in its pure and unadulterated form was therefore undertaken as their holy duty. The Bible, Catechism and hymnbook all served as the wellspring for their lives; while the church, school and home provided the settings in which these could be learnt and lived. (Own translation)

The second treasure was that of their German *Volksart* (Germanness), to which they remained firmly devoted, for it is part of the Lutheran faith to regard *Volkstum* (nationality) as something God-given. God's divine will had placed them in their *Volk* and as such they now served God in the positions that he had afforded them. It was through their recognition of this obligation that they held fast to their mother-tongue, their German customs and German practice. The Lutheran faith and German *Volkstum*, these are the inheritance... (Own translation)

As had been stipulated under point 7 of the *Stiftungsurkunde*, one plot in the town was reserved for the building of a church, and a school, and was then given to the HMS as a gift; no doubt in the hope that the latter would assist them in funding its construction. As it turned out, the HMS eventually decided to sell its erf to another German immigrant, Heinrich Lange, in what must have been a significant disappointment for the community,

²² W. Wickert, *Und die Vögel des Himmels wohnen unter seinen Zweigen. Hundert Jahre Bauernmission in Südafrika*. 1949. p. 356.

²³ W. Wickert, *Und die Vögel des Himmels wohnen unter seinen Zweigen. Hundert Jahre Bauernmission in Südafrika*. 1949. p. 356.

even if these emotions are not expressly mentioned in the available source material.²⁴ The result was that following a second survey of the property and the availability of additional irrigation for previously dry lands, a new site was chosen for the church, although construction was only begun later in 1895.²⁵

The physical creation of an *Ortschaft* in the pattern of a “new Hermannsburg” brings to the fore the relationship that arose between the Kroondal community and that of its immediate surroundings upon which it now strove to impart their particular sense of Germanness. In many ways the physical development of Kroondal might be described as a process of association in which the landscape of the farm along with that of the region’s greater geography gradually began to take on the sense of *Heimat* for its new inhabitants. This sense of belonging that has already been discussed in this dissertation’s chapter *Heimat and Deutschtum*, references ideas such as those of Anthony Smith’s “historic land” in which “terrain and people have exerted mutual, and beneficial influence” upon each other and thereby, begin to “belong to each other”.²⁶ It is a notion that has been expressed in a variety of contexts, but one which seems to find particular resonance to German immigration as described by Thomas Lekan in the book, *The Heimat Abroad*:

... (the) belief that they (German Americans) had physically inscribed a particular cultural landscape into their new Heimat....that the distinctive cultural landscapes that had emerged in their home country through centuries of occupation would be recapitulated in a foreign setting. Their concept of landscape resembled that of Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl, whose romantic concept of *Land und Leute* (land and people) had proposed a belief that each landscape, be it national, regional, or local, represented an aesthetic totality that synthesized natural features and cultural customs into an organic whole, a *Kulturlandschaft*...Germanness, in this sense, was not merely linguistic or cultural; it could be envisioned, even touched, in particular landscapes and natural experiences.²⁷

The concept of *Kulturlandschaft* or Cultural-landscape, in which German immigrants felt that they could recapitulate the physical attributes of their heritage into those of their new

²⁴ H. Behrens & I. Behrens. *Die Siedlung Kroondal. 100 Jahre 1889-1989. Festschrift zum Jubiläumsfeier am 4. November 1989*. 1989. p. 56.

²⁵ T. Wenhold, *Die Geschichte Kroondals*. 1970. p. 87.; L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*. 1987. p. 237.

²⁶ A. Smith, *National Identities*. 1991. p. 9.

²⁷ K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, p. 142.

surroundings, is certainly as true of the Kroondal community as it was for those in North America at that time. In the case of Kroondal, the most obvious example of this notion was the community's active transformation of their property from that of extensive farmland into the traditionally intensive and relatively communal pattern of farming that was more common to those found in northern Germany.²⁸ This fundamental expression of Germanness was thereby similarly extended into other aspects of the community's development that included features such as the farm's watermill (that in times of water scarcity was converted to harness the power of an old steam-engine) along with that of the typically German architecture of the Lutheran church some years later.²⁹

One of the most prominent aspects of any group's association to a particular landscape, including that of Kroondal, is the general importance of place names in establishing a sense of affiliation to the local geography.³⁰ While the greater surroundings of the Western Transvaal had already been named with the arrival of the Voortrekkers many decades before the establishment of Kroondal, and by the Tswana people before them, the immediate vicinity of the farm and its individual divisions were soon afforded German names by their new owners. Names such as *Muhlshausen* (Muhl's house), *Eichenhof* (Oak yard), *Schwalbenheim* (Swallow's home) and *Mäuserpalast* (Mouse palace) were all among the names that gradually became part of Kroondal's history. Other names such as *Buchenholz* were simply Germanized versions of their Afrikaans namesakes, such as in this case with the word "Boekenhout".³¹ The role of place names and institutions in developing the German character in a landscape is once again well referenced in literature on German immigration and settlement, this time, however, by the author Daniel Walther with regard to the German colony of South-West Africa:

Life in the old homeland was replicated by building German towns and setting up familiar administrative, economic, and sociocultural institutions and lifestyles - German families, clubs, churches, monuments. Throughout the colony were place-names that owed their origin to the German occupation. As Wilhelm Külz

²⁸ F. Schroeder. *Missionare und Pioniere*. 1992. pp. 20-21.

²⁹ H. Behrens & I. Behrens. *Die Siedlung Kroondal. 100 Jahre 1889-1989. Festschrift zum Jubiläumsfeier am 4. November 1989*. 1989. p. 23.; R. Ottermann. *Festschrift Ottermann*. 1993. pp. 22, 26-27.

³⁰ L. Möller. Duitse Plekname in SuidAfrika, *Lantern. Special Edition: The German Contribution to the Development of SA*, Feb 1992, p. 104-107.

³¹ H. Behrens & I. Behrens. *Die Siedlung Kroondal. 100 Jahre 1889-1989. Festschrift zum Jubiläumsfeier am 4. November 1989*. 1989. p. 23.; R. Ottermann. *Festschrift Ottermann*. 1993. p. 50.

remarked after his visit to SWA, “German South Africa is no protectorate, it is without a doubt, German land.”³²

Walther continues:

The new structures symbolized the colonization of Southwest Africa as a German possession; the message was: the territory belongs to Germany and is populated by Germans.³³

While the settlement of Kroondal held no such territorial affiliations to Germany, its devotion to the cultural and confessional heritage of the HMS, as were expressed in the words of Louis Harms, “Never forget that you are Lutherans, Germans and Hermannsburgers”³⁴ (own translation), served all but the same purpose. It was the idea, that their interaction with the land through hard work and cultural stewardship, could create a little piece of Germany (northern Germany) in the western Transvaal of southern Africa, that thereby places the notion of *Kulturlandschaft* at the heart of Kroondal’s development as a new *Heimat* for its community. It was a physical commitment to a place in which, what had been the call to *Treue* (devotion) for the Hermannsburg missionaries, now became the tangible duty or *Pflicht* (duty) of their descendants to fulfill in the creation of the settlement.³⁵

The initial years in Kroondal were marked by hardships for its new inhabitants. Lacking sufficient financial capital, the young farmers relied heavily upon one another for mutual assistance in the development of their lands.³⁶ It was a difficult period that spanned almost two decades after the settlement’s inception in 1889 and which had the misfortune to correspond with some of the most cataclysmic natural and political events in the region’s history. At the time of its purchase, the Kroondal farm was in a terrible state of disrepair after having lain fallow for more than ten years.³⁷ As a result, “luxuries” such as family residences were only slowly erected, and it was by and large only due to the communal

³² D. Walther. *Creating Germans Abroad*. 2002. p. 102.

³³ D. Walther. *Creating Germans Abroad*. 2002. p. 88.

³⁴ W. Wickert, *Und die Vögel des Himmels wohnen unter seinen Zweigen. Hundert Jahre Bauernmission in Südafrika*. 1949. p. 357.

³⁵ M Barker & H Homeyer, *The Pocket Oxford German Dictionary*. 1962. p. 62.

³⁶ H. Behrens, *Kroondal - A German Settlement*. 1995 (Article) p. 2.

³⁷ L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*, 1992, pp. 235-236.

nature of the settlement that families managed steadily to establish themselves.³⁸ In a number of the community's written sources, these first years after the settlement's founding are collectively referred to as "*Rinderpest, Heuschrecken, Fieber*" (Rinderpest, Locusts and Fever) or simply as the *Fieberjahre* or "Fever-years".³⁹ Beginning with the outbreak of the Rinderpest (cattle-plague) in the Rustenburg region in 1896 the Kroondal farmers lost virtually their entire herds to the infectious disease that continued to decimate much of southern Africa until an effective inoculation was discovered in 1897.⁴⁰ This was the first in a series of natural disasters that the community had to withstand as is recorded in the words of Kroondal's founder and pastor, Christian Müller, in a letter from 1898 to his brother-in-law in Germany:

*Das böse Malariafieber hat uns dieses Jahr wieder gehörig geschüttelt, und es sind demselben ziemlich viel erlegen, so wohl Weiße als auch Schwartze... Eins unserer Großkinder ist am Fieber gestorben, ich hab auch über 8 Tage schwer krank am Fieber darnieder gelegen,.. Ach es sind die beiden letzten Jahre sehr schwere Jahre gewesen. Erst die Rinderpest und Fieber, und Dürre und Heuschrecken, und wieder Dürre, Heuschrecken und Fieber.*⁴¹

The terrible malaria fever has once again made in-roads into the community and a number of people have died from the affliction, both Whites and Blacks... Among those who died was one of our grandchildren and I myself was taken seriously ill with fever for eight days...The last two years have both been particularly hard. First Rinderpest, fever, drought and locusts and then again drought, locusts and fever. (Own translation)

However, where Kroondal was fortunate, was that its particular location seemed to remain relatively less affected by malaria, whereas much of the surrounding region felt the brunt of its effects. The result was that many of community's outlying and predominantly missionary families often sent those worst affected to Kroondal where it was hoped that

³⁸ W. Wickert, *Und die Vögel des Himmels wohnen unter seinen Zweigen. Hundert Jahre Bauernmission in Südafrika*. 1949. p. 362.

³⁹ H. & I. Behrens et al. *100 Jahre Muhls in Südafrika β Festschrift*. 1983. p. 18.; L. Wenhold & H. Behrens. *Die Familie Wenhold 100 Jahre in Südafrika. Jubiläumsfeier am 10. Juli 1966*. 1966. p. 18.

⁴⁰ Animal Diseases
<http://www.nda.agric.za/vetweb/History/H_Diseases/H_Animal_Diseases_in%20SA8.htm> Access, 2012-10-21.

⁴¹ R. Ottermann (ed.) *Pastor Christian Müller (1836-1916) und Frau Luise Müller, geb. Ottermann (1844-1930) von Kroondal*. p. 23

they would recuperate from their illness.⁴² It was a pattern of compounded misfortune that saw consecutive years of drought and locust plagues ravage crops, while over the course of every summer malarial fever continued to produce widespread illness and all too often death among the region's greater population. For many in the community of Kroondal, nature's relentless assault may well have proved to be too much, were it not for an equally coincidental series of events that provided a lifeline to the local economy, but which in so doing, similarly served to reshape the political landscape of the region as a whole.

The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 along with the rapid expansion of the mining town of Johannesburg from the mid-1890's, all took place a little less than one hundred kilometres to the south east of Kroondal.⁴³ In many ways, it seems fairly ironic that the wellbeing of a community that prided itself on its idealistically agrarian and pre-industrial character would then come to owe so much of its initial success on the development of the neighbouring industrial giant. For the inhabitants of Kroondal, as too for the rest of the Transvaal Republic, the unprecedented growth of the Johannesburg gold fields resulted in an almost insatiable demand for agricultural produce that thereby transformed what had previously been a relative economic backwater.⁴⁴ In spite of any ideological differences that might have existed between them, the financial benefits of Johannesburg's growth along with the sufficient distance that could be maintained between the Kroondal *Ortschaft* and the mining town's increasing urban sprawl, meant that its establishment represented a welcome boon to the Kroondal community.⁴⁵ Such sentiments were, however, not echoed by the HMS, whose fundamental brief had always been aimed at staving off what it regarded as the negative hallmarks of European capitalism upon African societies.⁴⁶ It was therefore, hardly surprising that the HMS remained strongly opposed to the rise of the Johannesburg mining industry and its alluring prospects of wage labour that increasingly drew larger numbers of rural Africans into the city.⁴⁷

⁴² H. & I. Behrens et al. *100 Jahre Muhls in Südafrika β Festschrift*. 1983. p. 18.; L. Wenhold & H. Behrens. *Die Familie Wenhold 100 Jahre in Südafrika. Jubiläumsfeier am 10. Juli 1966*. 1966. p. 22.

⁴³ C. Van Onselen. *New Babylon New Nineveh. Everyday life on the Witwatersrand 1886-1914*. 1982. pp. 1-2.

⁴⁴ W. Wickert, *Und die Vögel des Himmels wohnen unter seinen Zweigen. Hundert Jahre Bauernmission in Südafrika*. 1949. p. 370.

⁴⁵ A. H. D. Behrens, *Der Farmer von Kroondal*. 1956. p. 57.

⁴⁶ H. Harms, *Concern for the Unreached. Life and work of Louis Harms, founder of the Hermannsburg Mission*. 1999. p. 51.

⁴⁷ W. Wickert, *Und die Vögel des Himmels wohnen unter seinen Zweigen. Hundert Jahre Bauernmission in Südafrika*. 1949. pp. 212-214.

As much as the presence of gold upon the Witwatersrand served to support Kroondal's own gradual development in the face of its many challenges, its presence simultaneously served to drive the region into the grips of political tensions that eventually resulted in the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War in 1899. It was a path that in essence began with the steady influx of *Uitlanders* (foreigners) into the Transvaal, whose grievances regarding their own disenfranchisement in the Republic were seized as a convenient rallying point by the British Empire in order to pursue the newly acquired wealth of the ZAR. Therefore, it was in 1895 that the shadows of war first appeared on the horizon with the developments of the fateful Jameson Raid, in which the Kroondal community played its own unexpected part.⁴⁸

The Jameson Raid, that was orchestrated by the then Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, Cecil John Rhodes, and led by his colleague Dr. Leander Jameson, was intended as an armed seizure of Johannesburg by six hundred Rhodesian and Bechuanaland policemen who were in the employ of Rhodes' British South Africa Company. It was envisaged that Jameson's invasion would help to spark an *Uitlander* (foreigner) revolt and thereby lay the stage for the ZAR's incorporation into the British Empire. As it turned out, the Johannesburg insurrection never materialized and Jameson's small party of troopers were quickly detected after crossing into the Transvaal from the Bechuanaland border on 29 December 1895. As the news of the Raid quickly spread throughout the ZAR, the nearest military unit, which happened to be the Rustenburg Commando under General Piet Cronje, was rapidly mobilized to meet the threat.⁴⁹ The Commandos, who were little more than a loosely organized form of civilian militia within every district of the ZAR, were summoned from their homes by a series of courier riders that had proved to be a simple and yet efficient means of defence for the Boer Republics. For the inhabitants of Kroondal, the call to arms came as they were busy working on the construction of their new church's roof the weekend before the new year. As all the young men were naturalized *burghers* (citizens) and therefore eligible for military service, they "downed their tools (and) grabbed their rifles" as was also described by one of the Hermannsburg missionaries, Peter (Hermann) Wenhold, at the Kana mission station, a little more than ten kilometres north of Kroondal.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*. 2000. pp. 69-71.

⁴⁹ T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*. 1979. pp. 1-5.; L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*, 1992, pp. 237-238.

⁵⁰ L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*, 1992. pp. 237-238.; J. S. Bergh (ed.), *Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die Vier Noordelike Provinsies*. 1998. p. 57.

Schon am letzten Tage des Jahres 1895 gingen oder viel mehr flogen die Eilboten durchs Land die Bauern auf zu rufen, denn ein Feind kam ins Land gefallen, nämlich der Engländer Dr. Jamison (sic), kam mit einer Schar von 800 Mann mit Kanonen und allerlei Mordwaffen, gleich einem Freibeuter herein das Land zu erorbern. So mussten auch 4 meiner Söhne, sofort in Dienst, der jüngste dieser 4 musste die Comandieorder weiter bringen, die andern 3 noch am Abend vor Neujahr zu Pferde fort...⁵¹

On the last day of the year in 1895, messengers went or rather flew through the countryside to call the farmers to service as an enemy had come to invade the land. It was the Englishman Dr. Jamison (sic) who had come with a troop of 800 men along with canons and all manner of murderous weapons like a bandit to conquer the land. Therefore my own 4 sons were also called to service, of which the youngest had to ride out in order to relay the “commando-order”, while the 3 others departed that same evening before New Year on horseback... (Own translation)

After harassing Dr. Jameson’s column for two days, the Rustenburg Commando finally pinned them down in the vicinity of Krugersdorp, where, after experiencing heavy casualties, the British finally surrendered.⁵² The fiasco of the Jameson Raid was, however, merely a foretaste of the conflict that was to come when four years later the steadily declining diplomacy between the ZAR and British governments finally collapsed in October 1899.⁵³

The ensuing conflict that has since become known as the (second) Anglo-Boer War or alternatively as the South African War, waged for over two and a half years and only served to add further woes to what had already been a brutal decade of disasters for the Western Transvaal.⁵⁴ As had been the case in the Jameson Raid, all the eligible men in Kroondal answered the call to join the ZAR Commandos in the Republic’s general mobilization of September 1889. As before, the men from the little *Ortschaft* were again stationed with the Rustenburg Commando and therefore took part in many of its actions,

⁵¹ L. Wenhold & H. Behrens. *Die Familie Wenhold 100 Jahre in Südafrika. Jubiläumsfeier am 10. Juli 1966.* 1966. p. 18.

⁵² T. Pakenham, *The Boer War.* 1979. pp. 4-5.

⁵³ T. Pakenham, *The Boer War.* 1979. p.117.

⁵⁴ V. Carruthers, *The Magaliesberg.* 2000. pp. 290, 334.

including the unsuccessful siege of Mafeking and attacks at Derdepoort.⁵⁵ For the community of Kroondal that had remained behind, life during these initial phases of the War proved to be relatively quiet, were it not for the malarial fever that continued to ravage the district with illness and death.⁵⁶

As the fighting wore on into the autumn of 1900 and the malarial attacks gradually receded, the towns of the western Transvaal were soon faced by a new threat, this time in the form of a British invasion.⁵⁷ For the majority of the Rustenburg Commando who had been deployed at Mafeking in the northern Cape Colony, the War had started to drag on and with the news that a strong British relief force was underway, the Commando's already weakening resolve quickly gave way to large-scale desertion as frustrated *burghers* decided to head for home. Following the relief of Mafeking, the town's celebrated commander, Robert Baden-Powell, was given charge of the northern flank of the British advance into the Transvaal. into which he proceeded virtually unopposed to capture its regional capital of Rustenburg, a week after the fall of Pretoria in June 1900.⁵⁸ For the majority of the Rustenburg Commando the War appeared to be over and a large number of its men, including some of the Kroondalers, handed in their firearms and signed the oath of neutrality that would allow them to remain on their farms. It was only upon the realization that most of the other Boer leaders in the field had decided to continue the fight in the form of guerilla warfare, that many Rustenburgers were once again persuaded to rejoin the commandos.⁵⁹

This next phase of the War, that the British commanders optimistically predicted would resemble nothing more than a "mopping up" exercise, proceeded to drag on for a further two long years and so doing claimed the lives of many more on both sides of the conflict.⁶⁰ Yet, it was also a period in the War that provides an especially valuable perspective of the Kroondal settlement, as it was seen through the eyes and journal of a German volunteer to

⁵⁵ L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*, 1992, pp. 136-137.

⁵⁶ R. Ottermann (ed.) *Pastor Christian Müller (1836-1916) und Frau Luise Müller, geb. Ottermann (1844-1930) von Kroondal*. pp. 28-30.

⁵⁷ The following paragraph is by and large taken from an Honours essay "Kroondal in the Anglo-Boer War: An appraisal of German settlers' interaction with Briton, Boer and Black." Marcus Melck, 2005, which was later translated and published as "Kroondal im Kontext des Südafrikanischen Krieges - Die Beziehungen deutschsprachiger Siedler zu Buren und Afrikanern." Marcus Melck, as part of the study: *Deutsche evangelische Kirche im kolonialen südlichen Afrika. Die Rolle der Auslandsarbeit von den Anfängen bis in die 1920er Jahre*. 2011.

⁵⁸ L. S. Amery (ed.), *The Times History of the War in South Africa, 1899-1902*. 1906. pp 221, 225-226.; V. Carruthers, *The Magaliesberg*. 2000. p. 298.

⁵⁹ L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*, 1992, pp. 75-76.

⁶⁰ E. Lee, *To the Bitter End. A Photographic History of the Boer War 1899-1902*. 2002. p. 118.

the republican cause, named Oskar Hintrager. As a young German law graduate at the time of the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War, Oskar Hintrager joined a fairly significant contingent of European nationals who felt compelled to journey to South Africa in order to volunteer for military service on the side of the Boer Republics. Once there and having spent four months fighting together with the *Vrystaat Artillerie* (Free State Artillery), he found himself as part of General Christiaan de Wet's epic evasion of British forces that led him and his commando into the Transvaal and so too, to a brief visit to the Kroondal *Ortschaft*.⁶¹ It was in this encounter with the German settlement under the slopes of the Magaliesberg mountains that Hintrager's observations as both that of a German national, as well as that of somebody who had never laid eyes upon the settlement before, represent a highly valuable source of information regarding the general nature of its character.

15 August - Camp at Kroondal

Yesterday we moved our camp over the pass and into this lovely valley that is surrounded on all sides by mountains. Given that the English are advancing from the south and the Magaliesberg only has two access points in this area - Olifantsnek and Machadonek - we are protected by a genuinely natural fortress and can thus rest a while. The valley in which we now find ourselves must be one of the most beautiful of the Transvaal and is called the "garden of the Republic"...

A Kroondal burgher, who had delivered corn to us and had sat a long while with us around last night's campfire, had invited me to visit him today. He is a German by the name Backeberg... So this morning I rode to Kroondal, roughly half an hour from here, with the lovely church tower beckoning to us... The old Backeberg and his wife showed and told me a lot about Germany and in my imagination it was as if I was back in Germany. He has a long table (ten children) where everything is done according to German custom. After lunch we went to the well-tended garden in front of the house where his beautiful daughters stuck a few "vaderlandse" flowers into my shirt's buttonhole.⁶²

⁶¹ J. Oberholster (ed.), *Dagboek van Oskar Hintrager - saam met Christiaan de Wet, Mei tot September 1900*, Christiaan de Wet-annale, 2. 16 August 1900. pp. 6, 112.

⁶² J. Oberholster (ed.), *Dagboek van Oskar Hintrager - saam met Christiaan de Wet, Mei tot September 1900*, Christiaan de Wet-annale, 2. 16 August 1900. pp. 32-33.

Although Hintrager's perception of Kroondal was no-doubt skewed by the long months that he had spent in the field followed by the contrasting hospitality of the Kroondal Germans, it nevertheless does provide a sufficiently reliable perspective on the intensely German character of the settlement and its population.

With the continuing escapades of Boer generals such as de Wet in eluding the overwhelming mass of the more conventional British forces that had been arrayed against them, the British high command next decided upon a strategy of "scorched earth" and the forced removal of the Boer Republics' rural populations, whose continued assistance to the commandos had managed to afford them the necessary mobility for continuing their struggle. It was a brutal tactic that expressly targeted the civilian population in a desperate attempt both to starve and demoralize the *bitter-einders*, as the defiant Boer commandos had come to be known.⁶³ The realization of this policy that began in January 1901 was to have far reaching consequences for the community of Kroondal, that had already been burdened by the demands of War from both sides, as Missionary Müller recounts in another of his letters to his brother-in-law in November 1900:

Es ist jetzt ein richtiger Gurillakrieg, der nur zum Ruin des Landes führen muß. Wir haben auch große Verluste gehabt bisher, wenigstens haben wir bis jetzt an Vieh, Eseln und Wagen was uns alles genommen ist ohne es uns zu bezahlen, £400 verloren. Ach wenn doch bald Friede würde, wie verlangt es einem.

*Mitunter ist als ob man den Verstand verlieren müßte unter all der Unruhe und dem Getümmel. Wie viele Tausende von Truppen und Bauern sind in den letzten 4 Monaten über Kroondal gezogen, wenigstens 25000 Mann außer den Tausenden von Wagen, Pferden und Maulthieren und Ochsen. Man kommt aus der Angst und Unruhe nicht heraus.*⁶⁴

It has now become a real guerilla war that will surely lead to the ruin of the country. We have also incurred significant financial losses till this point, approximately £400 when one considers the cattle, donkeys and wagons that were all taken from us without compensation. Oh, how one wishes that peace would come soon.

⁶³ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*. 2000. p. 73.; F. Pretorius, *Life on Commando during the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*. 2000. p. 327.

⁶⁴ R. Ottermann (ed.) *Pastor Christian Müller (1836-1916) und Frau Luise Müller, geb. Ottermann (1844-1930) von Kroondal*. p. 32.

As if these concerns were not enough, it now feels as though we may lose our sanity due to the constant unrest and bustle. How many thousand troops and Boers have not passed through Kroondal in the last 4 months, at least 25 000 men, not to mention all the wagons, horses, mules and oxen. It seems that we are never entirely free of fear or constant upheaval. (Own translation)

As was the case for the rest of the region, Kroondal suffered under the forced removals that were carried out in the settlement on 16 January 1901. However, in an unusual turn of events, the inhabitants of Kroondal were given a full two days notice of their impending displacement that stood in stark contrast to the fate of most of the Boer families who were simply loaded onto wagons with only a few minutes to prepare. It is equally interesting to note that, whereas most farm houses were immediately looted and sacked, those in Kroondal only suffered a similar fate once their owners had been taken out of sight, all the while being given assurances that their property would be protected from any damage.⁶⁵ These events were later described by Luise Müller, the wife of Kroondal's missionary Müller, in a letter to her brother in Germany, that she wrote from their temporary lodgings in Pretoria. In it she describes the curious pattern of their removal that she clearly regarded as favouritism towards the German population.

Mein lieber Bruder wilst Dir einen kleinen Begriff davon haben, wie uns zu Mute ist, so stelle Dir einmahl vor, wenn man so nach und nach, etwa in 3 bis 4 Monathen Dir all Dein Vieh und Schweine Hünen Karre Hafer Wagen Ackergerät alles so nach und nach abnähme und denn steht Abends 8 Uhr in dunkler Nacht ein Wagen vor der Thür und sagt ein hoher Herr schnell Aufladen wir spannen nicht aus es geht gleich weiter, doch sie es zu ihrer Ehre gesagt daß sie es uns 2 Tage vorher haben wissen lassen, daß wir uns dazu Rüsten sollten, daß haben sie aber nur bei uns Deutschen getan, ach die armen Bauerfrauen, die mußten zum theil auf den Wagen, ohne eine Deke, so wie sie gerade waren, und kaum waren sie weg da sahen sie wie all ihr Gut ein Raub der Flammen ward, was sie nicht davon anstechen konnten, die Herrn Eng.⁶⁶ (sic)

⁶⁵ R. Ottermann (ed.) *Pastor Christian Müller (1836-1916) und Frau Luise Müller, geb. Ottermann (1844-1930) von Kroondal*. 1995. p. 39.

⁶⁶ R. Ottermann (ed.) *Pastor Christian Müller (1836-1916) und Frau Luise Müller, geb. Ottermann (1844-1930) von Kroondal*. 1995, p. 39.

My dear brother, if you wish to gain a little insight into our current circumstances, then imagine for a moment that one for one, over the course of 3-4 months, all your cattle and pigs, chickens, cart, wagon and farming implements are, bit by bit, taken from you. And then one dark evening at eight o' clock there stands a wagon at your door and a lofty lord announces to you that you need to load up quickly as they are not out-spanning and will be leaving shortly. Yet, let them take credit for the fact that they warned us two days in advance that we should prepare ourselves, although they only did this for the Germans. But oh, the poor Boer women who had to board the wagon just as they were found, some without even a blanket. No sooner were these on their way when they had to witness flames burning everything that the Lords of England couldn't carry away. (Own translation)

Such scruples were, however, not observed in the more isolated Hermannsburg Missionary Stations that by and large suffered the same abrupt fate as those of the surrounding farmers with the destruction of their homes and their internment in concentration camps. It was a desperate time in which many of the men who had signed the oath of neutrality were also summarily arrested and sent to prisoner-of-war camps for fear that they too might be persuaded to return to the commandos, as indeed many of their compatriots already had done, following their initial surrender in 1900.⁶⁷ For most of the civilians in the community of Kroondal, the remainder of the War was then spent in Pretoria where they were provided with some accommodation in the city as well as basic rations by the British authorities. When rations later became scarce the families had to rely on aid from their relations in Germany in order to ensure that they too were not taken to the nearby concentration camp of Irene. It was here, while still in Pretoria a little over a year later, that the elderly missionary Müller and his wife were informed of the death of their oldest son, Hermann, who was killed in action in January 1902.⁶⁸

Although the exact details of this period often remain sketchy, it appears feasible to suggest that the British authorities remained sensitive in their interactions with many of the German nationals and in particular those of the Kroondal settlement. It is possible that the British War Office feared that the ill treatment of a conspicuous German settlement may well have sparked a public outcry in Germany whose involvement in the conflict Britain had

⁶⁷ L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*, 1992, p. 247.

⁶⁸ R. Ottermann (ed.) *Pastor Christian Müller (1836-1916) und Frau Luise Müller, geb. Ottermann (1844-1930) von Kroondal*. pp. 34, 39, 40.

been anxious to avoid. Whatever the true reasons were for the relative leniency of their treatment, by the time of the War's conclusion in May 1902, Kroondal was in much the same position as that of most other farms, with its settlement looted and in ruins. As for the men of Kroondal, those who were captured also had to endure internment in prisoner-of-war camps as far afield as the island of St. Helena and in Ceylon, while of their companions who had remained in the field, two had been killed in the fighting with many others wounded or afflicted by malaria.⁶⁹ Ultimately, it was in August 1902 that the Kroondal families, who had been boarded in Pretoria, were permitted to make their way home to begin the long and slow process of rebuilding their settlement. It was a task that initially had to be undertaken on their own, as it would take many more months before their young men were finally able to return from the prisoner-of-war camps.⁷⁰

The calamities of war and disease that had taken such a heavy toll upon the Kroondal *Ortschaft* had, in turn, been utterly brutal to many of the more isolated HMS stations, in which some families were all but decimated by malarial fever only to suffer the destruction of their homes by the British soon thereafter. Further afield, on the Bechuanaland border, the little HMS station of Manuane had survived the War, but not without tragedies of its own. Situated just inside the British Protectorate, the family of Ernst and Marie Wehrmann had been spared much of the violence that had terrorized the western bushveld for the duration of the conflict. Yet, in other respects the isolated nature of their location did not spare them the onslaught of disease that claimed so many of their young children. As the War drew to a close, the seventy-year-old Ernst Wehrmann's health also slowly began to fail him. It was an affliction that seemed to attack the aging missionary's vocal chords that thereby gradually obstructed him in fulfilling his responsibilities as an ordained minister. The result was that by 1904, after almost forty years of service, the HMS decided to release the missionary of his duties to the Society. It was then, with the news that he and his family would have to vacate the Manuane mission station, that Ernst Wehrmann gathered what funds he had managed to save and bought himself a farm in the vicinity of the Kroondal settlement, which he then renamed *Wehrmannsruh* (Wehrmann's rest).⁷¹ It was with this resettlement that the Wehrmann family therefore became a part of the

⁶⁹ L. Wulfsohn, *Rustenburg at War*, 1992, pp. 239-240.

⁷⁰ R. Ottermann (ed.) *Pastor Christian Müller (1836-1916) und Frau Luise Müller, geb. Ottermann (1844-1930) von Kroondal*. pp. 43-45.; H. Stäcker & H. Behrens (ed.), *Festschrift 100 Jahre Muhls in Südafrika*. 1983. p. 25.

⁷¹ H. Behrens & H. Wehrmann (ed), *Wehrmannstreffen. 150. Geburtstag des Missionars Ernst Friedrich Wehrmann, Wehrmannsruh. 22 & 23 Oktober 1983*. 1983. p. 8.

Kroondal community that was then already a hive of activity as its inhabitants strove to rebuild what had been lost during the War.

One of the most immediate projects that were undertaken by the community during this time was the establishment of the *Deutscher Schulverein Kroondal* (German School-Association of Kroondal). The fact that the previous German school, *Morgensonne*, that was situated on the HMS station of Saron, north of Rustenburg, had been destroyed during the War, now prompted the community to invest in the construction of a new school within the bounds of its own settlement.⁷² This decision was certainly significant in that it was undertaken in the knowledge of the new British administration's offer to finance the reconstruction of the *Morgensonne* school as well as the positions of its teachers, if the community would agree to its incorporation into the new system of government schooling. It was an offer that the Kroondal community declined, given that, as they explained to the authorities, they were firmly committed to providing their children with an independent German education. Therefore, it was some feat that by 1905, at a time that was marked by severe economic hardships and less than a year after the institution had been founded, the community had managed to completed the construction of its new school.

Although the majority of the financial burdens for the Kroondal school's construction were still borne by the community, it is notable that a sizable donation was also received from the German *Kaiserreich* in what must have represented a subtle shift in the community's traditional association to the old *Heimat*.⁷³ Where the first generation of Kroondal had always looked to the HMS for support, the birth of the *Kroondaler Schulverein* (as it was generally known) together with the patronage of the German *Reich*, marked the beginning of a new era in which the loyalties of the community had begun to extend beyond those of the HMS and into a closer association with that of the emerging German nationalism. It is a subtlety that is conveyed in the first paragraph of the *Schulverein's* mission statement which, although it takes care to acknowledge the continued role of the church as a unifying factor within the community, does so as a statement of its relatively independent pursuit of *Deutschtum*.

⁷² H. Behrens, *Gomutti*. (unpublished) 1975. p. 2.

⁷³ . Wenhold & H. Behrens et al (ed). *Jubiläumsschrift 75 Jahre Deutscher Schulverein Kroondal. 1904-18. Juni-1979*. 1979. pp. 5-6.

*Der Zweck des Schulvereins ist die Erhaltung des Deutschtums in Transvaal. Der Verein stellt sich daher zur Aufgabe, nebst der kirchlichen Gemeinde ein zweites Bindeglied für die Deutschen zu werden, welches die zerstreut lebenden Deutschen sammeln, durch Pflege und Erhaltung der Kinder in einer deutschen Schule u. a. m. das (sic) Deutschtum kräftigen und seinen Fortbestand bei den Kommenden Geschlechtern gewährleisten soll.*⁷⁴

The purpose of the School-Association is to ensure the continuation of *Deutschtum* in the Transvaal. The Association, therefore, sets itself the task of becoming a second avenue of affiliation, next to that of the church, to which the far-flung German community can align itself. It is by nurturing the children within a system of German schooling that, amongst others, the strength and longevity of *Deutschtum* will be secured for future generations. (Own translation)

The severe trials that marked the beginning of Kroondal's establishment as a German settlement in the western Transvaal proved to be nothing less than a rite of passage for its inhabitants in which they gradually formed their own association with its landscape. It was a process that had begun within the idealistic foundations of the HMS, one that would continue to play an important part in defining the characteristics of its community. And yet, as much as the nature of Kroondal would continue with its determination to remain German, the realities of war, drought and disease had all served to mould what would eventually become an equal commitment towards their new *Heimat*. It was a pattern of belonging that Walther describes as a "process of identity" in his book on the Germans of South West Africa:

Indeed, the struggle with the land brought the colonists to it. Their labor, sweat, and blood had mixed with the soil. This mixing created a bond and a sense of ownership; they felt they had paid for the territory and thus it belonged to them... this physical and spiritual relationship with the land undeniably played a role in the character development of the Southwestern Germans.⁷⁵

For the Germans of Kroondal, their struggles with the land and that of its people had combined to give them the sense that they too had earned the right to belong there. It was

⁷⁴ G. Meyer, *Die Pflege der Deutschen Sprache im Westlichen Transvaal*. 1956. p. 30.

⁷⁵ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 94.

certainly a sense of ownership, but much more importantly, it was a notion of identity that was beginning to call upon them, not merely as Germans, but as *Afrikadeutsche*.

This dissertation's title, "The *Afrikadeutsche* of Kroondal" provides a depiction of the Kroondal community that was created in the *Deutschtumspolitik* (Deutschtum's politics) following the First World War and that neatly encapsulates the essential dualism of the community's identity as both African and German. Where this last chapter has discussed the Kroondal community's growing association to a new landscape and *Heimat*, what follows aims to summarize the community's idealistic perception of its own Germanness as it proceeded into the twentieth century. It is, therefore, important to acknowledge that while the scope of the coming chapter encompasses a significant range of historical developments that could each easily warrant an in-depth analysis of their own, such a task would be well beyond the capacity of this dissertation to fulfil. Instead, the next chapter *Gedenke das du ein Deutscher bist! / "Remember that you are a German!"* is solely aimed at tracing the Kroondal community's perception of the unfolding events in Germany that thereby served to inform and inspire its members in the pursuit of their own Germanness or *Deutschtum*.

Chapter 6. *Gedenke dass du ein Deutscher bist!*

Remember that you are a German!

Wir leben hier ja in einem Lande mit einer sehr gemischten Bevölkerung, was zur Folge hat, dass wir sehr leicht unsere liebe deutsche Sprache, Sitten und Gefühle verlieren. Wir sind allerdings alle bestrebt, gute Bürger dieses unseres angenommenen Heimatlandes zu sein, da wir hier leben, und auch von den Vorteilen, die das Land bietet, geniessen. Dieses darf uns aber nicht davon abhalten, unsere liebe deutsche Muttersprache, unsere deutschen Lieder and Sitten hoch zu halten und zu pflegen. Zur Förderung dieses Zieles sollen nun diese anregen, das zu halten, was als Motto auf der ersten Seite unserer deutschen Zeitung steht, nämlich: "Gedenke, dass du ein Deutscher bist!"¹

We live in a country with a very diverse population, which in turn could quite easily result in the loss of our beloved German language, customs and feelings. We have all endeavoured to be good citizens of this, our adopted Heimat-land, in which we have been fortunate to be able to share in its many advantages. However, this should not prevent us from honouring and maintaining our beloved German mother-tongue along with our German songs and customs. It is through the pursuit of these aspects that we will remain true to that which forms the motto of our German newspaper, namely: "Remember that you are a German!".

(Own translation)

August H. D. Behrens

Kroondal Deutscher Tag, 31 May, 1926

(Kroondal German Day)

¹ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.) *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tag Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950.* 1981. p. 7.

The turn of the twentieth century² witnessed a dramatic shift in the political landscape of Southern Africa as the conclusion of the Anglo-Boer War saw the incorporation of the Boer Republics into the British Empire as Crown Colonies. It was a development that consolidated Britain's influence over the region upon which only the territories of German South West Africa and Portuguese Mozambique remained to restrict its dominance over the entire subcontinent. As for the old Republics, the first years following the cessation of the conflict were characterized by the reconstruction of their war-torn countrysides. It was a period in which the new British administration hoped to anglicize its former enemies through means that included the introduction of English-medium schooling and the promotion of British settlement in its rural areas. Such initiatives, however, soon proved to be ill-conceived as the influx of British nationals failed to materialize and the new system of government education merely sparked the creation of an independent system of Dutch private schools under the banner of the *Christelik Nasionaal Onderwys* (Christian National Education).³ It was with the shortfall of its policies and the election of a liberal government in England in 1905, that the British authorities chose to abandon such measures in favour of a more reconciliatory approach towards the colonies. It followed that by 1907 the Transvaal and Orange Free State had both joined the two older Cape and Natal colonies in being granted "responsible" (self) government that, in turn, opened the door to the region's potential amalgamation into an economic and administrative whole. The result was that by 1909 the British parliament had passed the South Africa Act that enabled the merger of its four colonies into the Union of South Africa, which was then duly inaugurated on 31 May 1910, under the leadership of the ex Boer Generals Louis Botha and Jan Smuts.⁴

The developments that led to the birth of South Africa in the first decade of the twentieth century are notable in that they corresponded to the rising tide of European nationalism that would soon thereafter draw its countries and the world, into the events of the First World War.⁵ For the Union of South Africa it was an era that would similarly mark the beginnings of its own various forms of national identity that would then have their indelible

² "Turn of the century, in its broadest sense, refers to the transition from one century to another. Where no specific century is stated, the term usually refers (when encountered in literature written throughout most of the twentieth century and even, so far, through into the early 21st) to the transition from the 19th century into the twentieth century (1890–1914): thus, e.g., a novel referring to "turn of the century England" indicates England, c. 1900." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turn_of_the_century

³ J. Illsley, *Pretoria Boys High. The Story of a South African School 1901-2001*. 2000. pp. 26-27.; P. Furlong, *National Socialism, the National Party and the radical Right in South Africa, 1934-1948*. 1987. pp. 80-81.

⁴ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*. 2000. pp. 78-79, 83.

⁵ J. Glover, *Humanity. A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*. 2001. pp. 143, 176.

effect on the decades that were to follow. Of these, it was the inclusive nationalism of moderate politicians such as Smuts and Botha that championed the country's unification through advocating a collective and reconciliatory "South Africanism".⁶ However, for many others and particularly those in the old republics, the lingering bitterness of the War could not be reconciled in support of a common nationality, especially not one that would remain under the auspices of the British Empire. They were developments that laid the foundations of a resentful Afrikaner nationalism whose own dreams of nationhood would emerge as the dogged counterpoint to the hopes of South African national unification.⁷

As the stirrings of national identity were beginning to reveal the fissures in South Africa's new political cohesion, the settlement of Kroondal remained content to concern itself with striving for its own identity that was increasingly affixed to the idea of *Deutschtum*. As was discussed in Chapter Three of this dissertation, the notion of *Deutschtum* or Germanness, is closely associated with the rise of German nationalism in the nineteenth century.⁸ However, it was only with the advent of German imperialism in the last decade before the turn of the twentieth century that the political aspirations of Wilhelminian Germany began to elevate *Deutschtum* as a central theme within the country's nationalist discourse. It was a period in which the ambitions of German prestige and national unity were focused upon the development of a collective national character in which the idealization of an "old", pre-industrial Germanness stood in stark contrast to the rapid modernization of German society. The result was that for many nationalists, and particularly those of its rising middle classes, Germany's new colonial empire and especially its community of German expatriates or *Auslandsdeutsche* were increasingly perceived as the guardians of the "original" *Deutschtum*.⁹

The idealization of colonial Germanness was, however, not merely limited to the romantic notion of an agrarian German society, as it similarly drew upon the sentiments of many Germans who believed that the country's unification had essentially remained "unfulfilled", in the face of the continued "social, regional and confessional cleavages" within its

⁶ P. Furlong, *National Socialism, the National Party and the radical Right in South Africa, 1934-1948*. 1987. pp. 79-80.

⁷ L. Thompson, *A History of South Africa*. 1990. p. 148

⁸ H. Alberand et al. (ed.), *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhlem Grimm*. 6 Band. 1983. p. 821.

⁹ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. pp. 2, 10, 12.; K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, p. 62.

population. They were beliefs that author Daniel Walther describes with specific relevance to the German colony of South West Africa:

...colonialism (then) became a vehicle to unite the nation (in which) Southwest Africa...was seen as a place to create a truly united German(y). Such a place would provide not only a place for Germany's many emigrants to settle and preserve their *Deutschtum* but also a model for the old *Heimat*.¹⁰

It was a vision in which Germany's new *Weltpolitik* (world politics) began to embrace the community of German expatriates as an integral part of its burgeoning global ambitions and in which the notion of *Deutschtum*, rather than citizenship, had become an increasingly popular measure of its national belonging.¹¹

Among the organizations that emerged in response to these new ideals of global Germanness was the *Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland* (Overseas Association for Deutschtum) that, along with patriotic organizations such as the *Deutscher Schulverein* (German School Association) strove to promote the maintenance of *Deutschtum* within the extensive community of Germans abroad.¹² When viewed together, the development of German nationalism at the turn of the twentieth century undoubtedly had a marked effect upon the community of Kroondal's perception of its own German identity at a time when South Africa was still grappling with its own fledgling nationhood. It was, therefore, hardly surprising when in 1904, barely two years after the devastation of the Anglo Boer War, the inhabitants of Kroondal set about prioritizing the development of *Deutschtum* in their community with the already mentioned establishment of their own *Deutscher Schulverein Kroondal* (German School-Association of Kroondal).¹³

The *Kroondaler Schulverein*, as it was known in its shortened form, was inaugurated with the completion of its *Schülerheim* or boarding house in July 1905. It was an event that similarly marked the beginning of the remarkable tenure of its new teacher and *Hausvater* (hostel-father) Johannes von Zwierring, who would become the virtual embodiment of the

¹⁰ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 2.

¹¹ K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, pp. 25, 153.

¹² K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, pp. 25-26, 153.; D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. xiv.,

¹³ Wenhold & H. Behrens et al (ed). *Jubiläumsschrift 75 Jahre Deutscher Schulverein Kroondal. 1904-18. Juni-1979*. 1979. pp. 5-6.

institution over the course of the next forty-five years. As a young missionary, von Zwiétring had first completed his two years of obligatory military service in the German army before entering the HMS seminary and being posted to South Africa in 1903. It was here, after only a few months on his isolated station in the western Transvaal, that the thirty-year-old missionary and his newly wedded wife, Anna, were released into the service of the Kroondal community who had petitioned the HMS for the services of a young school teacher.¹⁴ It was, therefore, entirely in keeping with its character when the curriculum and ethos of the Kroondal school were set on the traditional models of Prussian education, in which the typical emphasis on the German language and history were accompanied by an accentuation of “order, obedience and discipline” as was later described by one of its pupils thus:¹⁵

*Er (von Zwiétring) war enorm fleissig, ein Mann der Ordnung und Disziplin und ein energischer und strenger Erzieher. Wie es damals üblich war, hat er nicht gezögert ordentlich Schläge auszuteilen wenn Schüler sich etwas zu Schulden kommen liessen oder nicht genügend Disziplin und Schneid an den Tag legten.*¹⁶

He (von Zwiétring) was enormously diligent, a man of order and discipline and an energetic and stern educator. As was the norm in those days, he never hesitated to administer beatings to scholars who were guilty of a transgression or who had not demonstrated sufficient discipline and vigour. (Own translation)

Such stringent conditions were extended to those children living under the supervision of *Onkel* and *Tante* von Zwiétring in the *Schülerheim* (boarding house) where the rest of the day was similarly regimented according to a list of duties that culminated in each evening’s bible reading, hymns and prayer.¹⁷

As the Kroondaler school was consolidating its position in the settlement, the rest of the community began to consider its own forms of intellectual recreation that were increasingly centred upon the establishment of various associations or *Vereine*. As was the case in

¹⁴ H. Pape, *Hermannsbürger Missionare in Südafrika*. 1986. pp. 218-219.

¹⁵ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p 74.

¹⁶ Wenhold & H. Behrens et al (ed). *Jubiläumsschrift 75 Jahre Deutscher Schulverein Kroondal. 1904-18. Juni-1979*. 1979. p. 7.

¹⁷ A. W. T. Behrens, *Unser Vater Erzählt...*, 1975. pp. 6-7.; Wenhold & H. Behrens et al (ed). *Jubiläumsschrift 75 Jahre Deutscher Schulverein Kroondal. 1904-18. Juni-1979*. 1979. pp. 37-38.

other German communities around the world, such cultural associations were considered important for cultivating German “thoughts, ways and “customs” and thereby a key component in the general awareness of *Deutschtum*.¹⁸ It followed that when the *Kroondaler Debattierverein* or “debating society” was founded in 1909, it clearly stated its intentions as “furthering the use of the German language” within the community through activities that included fortnightly readings of prose and poetry along with those of its debates.¹⁹ They were developments that gradually prompted a series of other associations that, over time, came to include youth, shooting, tennis and women’s groups which, along with the school, served to position Kroondal as the vibrant centre of German cultural identity in the western Transvaal.²⁰

While the rising influence of German nationalism had spurred the growth of Kroondal’s society in the first decade of the twentieth century, its corresponding effect on international events too played its part in precipitating the global spiral into the First World War.²¹ For the Union of South Africa, its entry into the conflict as a British ally marked the beginning of its own tumultuous events that began when a number of its disaffected Afrikaner officers and generals resigned their commissions and proceeded to lead an armed rebellion against the South African government. Although the rebellion was soon put down, its extensive support in rural areas such as those of the western Transvaal, continued to foster the growth of Afrikaner nationalism that was, above all, united in its opposition to South Africa’s inclusion in the British empire.²² Such sentiments were, however, markedly different to those of the country’s predominantly English urban centres where the frustrations of its largely pro-British populace similarly gave way to a series of anti-German riots in which several German-owned businesses were looted and destroyed.²³ The result was that by the middle of 1915, South African politics had given way to the divergent factions of its own nationalism that would then continue to play their part in the country’s history in the years to come.

¹⁸ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p 91.

¹⁹ G. Meyer, *Die Pflege der Deutschen Sprache im Westlichen Transvaal*. 1956. p. 30.

²⁰ Wenhold, *Die Geschichte Kroondals*. 1970. p. 103.

²¹ M. Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*. 1990. pp. 148-150.

²² R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*. 2000. p. 84.; V. Carruthers, *The Magaliesberg*. 2000. pp. 337-341.

²³ L. Grundlingh, ‘n Aspek van Blanke Suid-Afrikaanse Groepsverhoudinge tydens die Eerste Wereldoorlog: Anti-Duitse Opstande Mei 1915. *South African Historical Journal*. No. 12. 1980. pp. 65-66.

In comparison to the rest of South Africa, the drama of the Great War passed relatively quietly for the community of Kroondal that had positioned itself as a silent, though no less partisan, spectator of its unfolding events.²⁴ In many respects, it was through the sheer fortune of its location in the heartland of Afrikaner nationalism, that the settlement was spared the intense pressures of anglicization that were invariably leveled against other German communities in former British colonies.²⁵ As such, the nature of Kroondal's misfortunes were instead centred upon the death of its aged founder and pastor, Missionary Christian Müller, who along with the subsequent passing of its young head teacher, Eduard Penzhorn, left a glaring void in the community's key offices.²⁶ In both instances the responsibilities of these positions fell upon the growing personality of Johannes von Zwietring who, as the community's new pastor and head teacher, then effectively became the stalwart of its German character.²⁷

As the War drew to a close with the armistice of 1918, the reality of Germany's defeat and subsequent humiliation in the Treaty of Versailles had a notable effect upon the Kroondal community that still perceived itself as being bound to the well-being of the German nation.²⁸ It was a sentiment that in many ways found its expression in the idea of a German *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* or "shared community of fate" as described in a portrayal of Kroondal at that time:

*Der erste Weltkrieg mit seiner furchtbaren Nachkriegszeit fand die Gemeinde als eine deutsche evangelische Gemeinde auf ihrem Posten. Eine wahre Schicksalsgemeinschaft had uns in jenen Tagen mit den Brüdern und Schwestern in der alten Heimat verbunden, und reiche Gaben in Gestalt von Geld, Mais und Rauchtabak für die Schwerkriegsbeschädigten und andere sind um diese Zeit nach Deutschland gegangen, um den Notleidenden und Hungernden zu helfen.*²⁹

²⁴ I. Behrens & N. Behrens, *Das Tagebuch des Missionaren Heinrich Behrens 1885 - 1940*. pp. 148-149, 153-154, 157, 159-161.

²⁵ C. Coburn, *Life at Four Corners. Religion, Gender, and Education in a German Lutheran Community, 1868-1945*. 1992, pp. 136-137.

²⁶ Wenhold & H. Behrens et al (ed). *Jubiläumsschrift 75 Jahre Deutscher Schulverein Kroondal. 1904-18. Juni-1979*. 1979. p. 10.; R. Ottermann (ed.) *Pastor Christian Müller (1836-1916) und Frau Luise Müller, geb. Ottermann (1844-1930) von Kroondal*. p. 48.

²⁷ H. Stäcker, H. Behrens, et al.(ed.), *100 Jahre Deutsche Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchengemeinde Kroondal 1886 bis 1996*. 1996. p. 13.

²⁸ M. Perry, *Western Civilization - A Brief History*. 1997. pp. 516-518.

²⁹ . Wenhold, *Die Geschichte Kroondals*. 1970. p. 95.

The First World War and its terrible postwar period found the community as an Evangelical German congregation at its post. A genuine *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* linked us to the brothers and sisters in the old *Heimat* to whom substantial aid was sent in the form of money, maize and tobacco to help ease the suffering of those worst affected by the destruction of the war and the shortages of food.
(Own translation)

In this sense, the community's commitment to the provision of material and financial aid to Germany (as well as some of Germany's former colonies)³⁰ was far more than a humanitarian concern, as it remained crucially indicative of the community's desire to reaffirm its belonging to the national narrative. They were concerns that came at a time when Germany's financial burdens from the War were further compounded by the loss of significant sections of its European territory that, together with its entire colonial empire, effectively amounted to one tenth of its population.³¹ The result was that, as millions of Germans were incorporated into foreign countries or else displaced in their attempts to relocate back to within the bounds of Germany's new borders, the country's political consciousness was once again directed towards the position of the *Auslandsdeutsche* in the formation of a new *Deutschumpolitik*.³² This notion of "Germanness-politics" that arose during the time of the Weimar Republic, was largely driven by the development of a "de-territorialized" and "de-institutionalized" perception of Germanness, in which the preservation of *Deutschtum* (as cultural Germanness) around the world became the dominant expression of post-war German nationalism.³³ It was therefore, once more, entirely in keeping with the development of its German heritage that Kroondal's emphasis on its own *Deutschtum* became the focus of an annual German day or *Deutsche Tag*.

The *Kroondaler Deutsche Tag* that was inaugurated after the First World War, was intended, in the words of its founder August Behrens, *das Deutschum hier im Lande zu stärken und zu erhalten* - "to strengthen and preserve the *Deutschum* in the land (South Africa)".³⁴ Although it was originally started as an annual birthday "picnic" for August

³⁰ I. Behrens, A. Müller & W. Miller (ed.), *Jahresberichte der Gemeinde Kroondal von 1916 bis 1949*. 2001. p. 2.

³¹ M. Perry, *Western Civilization - A Brief History*. 1997. pp. 516-518.

³² K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, p. 7.

³³ K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, p. 7.; D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p 107.

³⁴ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950*. 1981. p. 3.

Behrens' wife, Dora, its numbers soon grew to the point that the suggestion was made to use the occasion for the celebration of a "German day". Therefore, with its date moved to South Africa's Union Day celebrations on 31 May, ostensibly to avoid the frequent thunderstorms that were prevalent in the earlier summer months of the year (and notwithstanding the subtle irony of conflicting national celebrations) the first *Kroondaler Deutsche Tag* took place on the Behrens' *Bergheim* (Mountain-home) farm in the Magaliesberg in 1919.³⁵

The institution of the Kroondal German Day in the period between the First and Second World Wars represents a significant part of the community's self perception and yet, far more importantly, it represents one that was conveyed in the traditional keynote address of each of its respective guest speakers. Therefore, although the *Kroondaler Deutsche Tag* provides an important expression of Kroondal's German heritage, it was in the faithful documentation of each gathering's speech, by either one of two South African German newspapers, that its events ultimately provide the most valuable insight into the identity of Kroondal over the course of this period. The two periodicals in question were the "*Deutsche Afrika Post*" and "*Der Deutsch Afrikaner*", that only a few years later would also come to represent the contrasting views of German national identity during the rising era of national socialism in South Africa.³⁶ It follows that the remainder of this chapter makes use of a series of extracts from both these publications in order to comment upon the developments of Kroondal's German identity at that time:

Für den 31. Mai (1924), 9 Uhr morgens, war auf Bergheim deutscher Tag angesagt worden, und aus der ganzen Gegend, sogar aus Pretoria, folgten die Freunde dem Ruf. Vielversprechend war schon der Anblick, als ich am frühen Morgen auf allen Wegen die vielen Gefährte durch die Kroondaler Fläche auf Bergheim zu eilen sah: Schwere Ochsenwagen, die sich vor Tag aufgemacht hatten und die Kroondaler Schulkinder und jungen Leute brachten, flinke Karren und leichte Fahrräder, dazu die grossen Herren der Landstrasse, die Autos, alle trugen sie fröhliche Menschen nach Bergheim, die einmal die Schwere der Zeit und aus dem Zusammensein mit Deutschen neue Kräfte für die Zukunft schöpfen wollten.

³⁵ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950.* 1981. p. 3.

³⁶ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950.* 1981. pp. 3-4, 20.

Nach kurzem Vortrage des Bläserchors, nach Begrüssung durch Herrn August Behrens, den eigentlichen Veranstalter des Festes und nach gemeinsam gesungenem "Ich hab' mich ergeben." hielt unter uralten rauschenden Bäumen der 70jährige Herr Harms, in wallendem weissen Bart...die ergreifende Festrede, in den er die 2000-jährige deutsche Geschichte aufleben und durch die Erinnerung an die Grossen unserers Volkes...die Herzen der Hörer vor Stolz schwellen lies im Bewusstsein, ein Deutscher zu sein wie diese Fürsten der Menschheit.³⁷

Die Mittagspause wurde bei den Wagen unter den herrlichen Bergheimer Bäumen verbracht...bis um 2 Uhr die grosse Pauke erdröhnte. Es stieg ein Stück des Bläserchores, worauf von Walter Wenhold mit klarer Stimme und freier Haltung "Wir Deutsche in Südafrika" vorgetragen wurde, das uns erzählte wieviel wir Deutsche zu Entwicklung dieses Landes beigetragen haben. Nach einem Liede des gemischten Chores...gaben uns Mathilde und Else Penzhorn in dem Zweigespräch "die (sic) deutsche Mutter" ein Bild von der unsäglichen Not, die der lange Krieg über die deutsch Frauen gebracht hat...Der kleine Paul Penzhorn versicherte im "Deutschen Kinder-Kriegsgebet" als Knabe besonders schneidig und stolz: "Deutschland kann nicht untergehen."

Zu früh sank die Sonne und machte dem lustigen Treiben vorzeitig ein Ende. Schon wurden die Wagen bespannt, als noch einmal die Musik rief: Es kam die Preisverteilung, von Herrn Rohwer zwei packende Gedichte aus dem Krieg und von Herrn Rohwer und Christoph Penzhorn gemeinsam vorgetragen: "Versailles" von Kleuker in dem der grosse Christoph dem in Kriege ergrauten und durch Versailles zerbrochenen Vater männlich zuruft: "Versailles ist der Ruf, der Deutsche Knaben zu Männern schuf." Der Bläserchor blies ein schönes Lied und zu Ende ging der unvergessliche Tag, an dem ich in manchem Auge eine heimliche Träne blitzen sah.³⁸

The 31st of May (1924), at 9 o'clock in the morning was the appointed day for the *Deutscher Tag* at *Bergheim* to which friends from the surrounding district and even from Pretoria, answered the call. Early that morning, the day was already full of promise as the view across the plains around Kroondal was filled with vehicles

³⁷ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950.* 1981. p. 4.

³⁸ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950.* 1981. p. 5.

speeding their way towards *Bergheim*: Heavily laden ox-wagons that had begun their journey before day break and that carried Kroondal's school children and youngsters, fast carriages and light bicycles along with the big lords of the country roads, the automobiles, all carried happy people to *Bergheim* who in these depressing times were looking to spend the day with fellow Germans and to build new strength for the future.

After a short performance by the brass ensemble followed by the greeting from event's initiator, Mr August Behrens, and the singing of "*Ich hab' mich ergeben*" ("I have given myself") the 70-year-old Mr Harms, with his flowing white beard, delivered a captivating address beneath the rustling trees in which he recounted the 2000 year old German history by reminiscing about the great figures of the German people...the hearts of the audience swelled with pride in the knowledge that they too were Germans like these great leaders of humanity.

The lunch break was spent alongside the wagons under the lovely *Bergheim* trees...until 2 o'clock when the big drum sounded. The brass ensemble struck up a melody whereupon Walter Wenhold gave a reading of "We Germans in South Africa" in which, with a clear voice and easy manner, he described how much we Germans have contributed to the development of this land. After a song by the combined choir...Mathilde and Else Penzhorn dialogued "The German Mother" that portrayed the unspeakable suffering that the long war had wrought upon German women...The little Paul Penzhorn reassured us with pride and fervour in his rendition of "The German Children's War-prayer" that: "Germany can not go under." All too soon the sun began to sink and thereby brought the enjoyable proceedings to a premature end. The wagons were already being spanned as the music once more called everyone to the prize-giving where Mr Rohwer recited two powerful poems from the war, where after he and Mr Christoph Penzhorn gave a rendition of "Versailles" by Kleuker in which the big Christoph encouraged with manly voice the father who had been aged by the war and broken by Versailles: "Versailles is the call that turned German boys into men." The brass ensemble struck up one last song that then brought the unforgettable day to an end, in which I had seen hidden tears sparkle in the eyes of some of the guests.

(Own translation)

This lengthy extract from the account of the 1924 Kroondal *Deutsche Tag*, by the *Deutsch Afrikaner*, provides one of the first comprehensive descriptions of the day's proceedings that would remain essentially unchanged until the event was abandoned at the outbreak of the Second World War. Although the author's impression of the day offers an important frame of reference for the *Deutsche Tag* as a whole, it is the remarkable extent to which the community had maintained its association with the events of the First World War that illustrates the strength of its own perception as a *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*. In this sense it is a remarkable testament to the "collective memory" or perhaps "consciousness" of a community whose members had not actually experienced the events of the War, but whose whole-hearted association with the German national narrative had compelled them to remain deeply engaged in its events.³⁹ Therefore, it was not until a full decade after the end of the First World War that the frequent references to Germany's damaged national pride slowly began to recede from the accounts of the Kroondal German Day to be replaced by an increasingly *Volkisch* (*nationalistic*) and racialized depiction of Germany's national heritage.⁴⁰

Although the history of Germany's ethnic nationalism extends back to the Romanticism of the early nineteenth century, it was only with the country's collapse after the end of the First World War, along with the ensuing political and economic crises of the 1920's, that the appeal of *Volkisch* Germanness became the prominent feature of its politics. It was a development that held its own significant appeal for the communities of German expatriates who were thereby embraced as part of a greater German *Volksgemeinschaft* (Volk community) as alluded to in the account of the 1931 Kroondal *Deutsche Tag*:

Ebensowenig wie ein anderes Kleid einen anderen Menschen macht, ebensowenig bedeutet eine andere Staatszugehörigkeit. Beide beziehen sich auf den äusseren Menschen. Aber Volkstum ist Sache des Herzens, des Gemütes und des Blutes. Blut ist dicker als Wasser, das gilt hier ganz besonders. Mögt Ihr Euch noch so oft Afrikaner oder Deutsch-Afrikaner oder Afrika-Deutsche nennen; im entscheidenden

³⁹ A. Funkenstein, *Collective Memory and Historical Consciousness*, *History and Memory*, Vol 1, No. 1. 1989, p. 5.

⁴⁰ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950*. 1981. p. 7.

*Augenblick seid Ihr doch für die Anderen, zumal für die Gegner, Deutsche und werdet als solche behandelt.*⁴¹

Just as wearing a different dress achieves little in making a different person, equally little is meant by citizenship. Both merely affect the outer person. However, *Volkstum* (ethnicity/nationhood) is a matter of the heart, the soul and blood. Blood is thicker than water and that is especially applicable here. It doesn't matter whether you call yourselves "Africans" or "German-Africans" or "African-Germans"; when it comes down to it you are to one another, and especially to opponents, only Germans and are treated as such.

(Own translation)

It was the concept of ethnic Germanness that by 1933 had given rise to the extreme, racial nationalism of Germany's Nazi Party, whose appropriated concepts, such as those of a global *Volksgemeinschaft*, (ethnic community) were drawn into the creation of a national socialistic *Volkstumspolitik*.⁴² Accordingly, the notion of Germanness was no longer simply imbued with the traditional attributes of culture or language, but was instead transformed along the pseudo-scientific lines of social Darwinism whose racial and biological criteria were elevated as the foremost descriptors of German heritage.⁴³ The result was that under the new Nazi dispensation, the *Volksgemeinschaft* grew to represent a world wide, racial community of Germans or *Hundertmillionenvolk* (a nation of hundreds of millions) in which *Reichsdeutsche* (German citizens) and *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic Germans living abroad) were united through their German ethnicity.

For many German expatriates, including those of Kroondal, these were developments that seemed to promise the restoration of Germany's national honour, along with an unparalleled level of recognition of the community's longstanding commitment to their own German heritage. It was, therefore, hardly surprising when the Kroondal community's reaction to Adolf Hitler's ascent to power was characterized by enormous enthusiasm as described in the 1933 German Day:

⁴¹ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950*. 1981. p. 62.

⁴² A. Hagemann, *Südafrika und das "Dritte Reich". Rassenpolitische Afinität und machtpolitische Rivalität*. 1989. p. 84.

⁴³ K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, et al. *The Heimat Abroad*. 2005, pp. 59-61.

Der Vorschlag wurde von Onkel August Behrens gemacht, an den (sic) Reichspräsidenten und den (sic) Reichskanzler in Deutschland ein Kabel zu senden. Dieser Vorschlag wurde von allen Festteilnehmern mit grosser Freude angenommen. Somit wurde am nächsten Tage folgendes Kabel nach Hause gesandt:

“700 Afrikadeutsche, versammelt zur Feier Deutschen Tages 31. Mai (1933) Bergheim-Kroondal-Transvaal senden ehrerbietigste Grüsse und drücken ihre Freude aus über heutige Entwicklung und Aufstieg im Vaterlande.”⁴⁴

The suggestion was made by *Onkel August Behrens* to send a telegram to the German president and chancellor, that was endorsed with a great deal of joy by all of the day’s participants. Therefore, the next day the following telegram was sent home:

“700 Afrikadeutsche gathered in celebration of German Day 31 May (1933) Bergheim-Kroondal-Transvaal send their most respectful greetings and express their joy regarding the current developments and revival in the Fatherland.”

(Own translation)

The rise of Nazi Germany presents an interesting chapter in the history of the Kroondal community whose experiences of the developments in Germany were, by and large, limited to the propaganda of pro-Nazi organizations that soon included the prominent South African German newspaper, *Der Deutsch Afrikaner*.⁴⁵ And yet, at the same time, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the growth of Nazism in the country was also met with significant misgivings of many South African Germans whose access to liberal, English-speaking newspapers could not but have served to temper perceptions of the new regime. Among the areas that seemed to have elicited the most concern, and for the community of Kroondal in particular, was the establishment of the *Deutsche Jugend Südafrikas* - DJSA (German Youth of South Africa) and *Bund Deutscher Mädels* - BDM (League of German Girls) as organizations that then replaced their pre-existing *Pfadfindergruppe* (Pathfinder group) that had been formed in 1928 and was modeled upon

⁴⁴ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950*. 1981. p. 15.

⁴⁵ P. Furlong, *Between Crown and Swastika. The Impact of the Radical Right on the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement in the Fascist Era*. 1991. 74.

the German South West Africa equivalent of the Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts.⁴⁶ Both the D.J.S.A and B.D.M essentially replicated the Hitler Youth organizations in Germany,⁴⁷ that by 1934 had been established throughout South Africa along with their official magazine, *Die Brücke* (The Bridge), whose very first edition featured a report from the Kroondal *Pfadfindergruppe*:

*Als eine geschlossene Gruppe durften wir uns dann im letzten Jahre zuerst dem Südwester Pfadfinderbund und danach, als dieser in die H.J. überging, der Transvaal-H.J. anschliessen. Obgleich uns dieser Schritt von verschiedenen Seiten Unzufriedenheit und Misstrauen entgegenbrachte, dürften wir uns doch nur freuen, dass wir die Gelegenheit haben, der grossen deutschen Jugendbewegung anzugehören... Wenn sich Millionen von Stammesbrüdern über dem Meer einig zusammenschliessen und Adolf Hitler und seiner Idee Treue schwören, da wollen auch wir, denen doch das gleiche deutsche Blut in den Adern rinnt, uns dieser Idee anschliessen und ihrem Führer folgen.*⁴⁸

Over the course of the past year we, as an independent organization were first able to join the South-West Pathfinder Association and then, with its incorporation into the Hitler Youth, we too were allowed to merge with the Transvaal Hitler Youth. Although our decision to undertake these steps was met with disapproval and distrust on various different sides, we were, nevertheless, happy to have been given the opportunity to become members of this big German youth organization...If millions of our *Stammesbrüder* (ancestral-brothers) across the ocean are united and have sworn loyalty to Adolf Hitler and his idea, then we, who have the same German blood coursing through our veins, also want to join this idea and follow its leader.

(Own translation)

It was, therefore, not long thereafter that the *Kroondaler Deutscher Tag* featured the parade of the D.J.S.A and B.D.M at the event's 1934 opening that was described in the following commentary by the decidedly pro-Nazi *Deutsch-Afrikaner* newspaper:

⁴⁶ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 149.

⁴⁷ H. Behrens, *Ein Kroondaler*. (unpublished) p. 10.

⁴⁸ H. Müller (ed.), *Die Brücke der Jugend*. no.1, 1934. pp. 3-4.

Kroondal stand diesmal mehr denn je im Zeichen der Jugend, aber nicht mehr einer Jugend, die deutsch im bisher üblichen Sinne ist, sondern die ganz bewußt ihre Kraft aus national-sozialistischem Geiste schöpft. Man war überrascht, wie stark der Geist des neuen Deutschlands gerade auch die Jugend erfaßt hatte, deren Vorfahre schon seit Generationen im Lande ansässig sind. Hier ist eine Bewegung entstanden, die nicht mehr aufzuhalten ist...Schulter an Schulter standen auslandsdeutsche und reichsdeutsche Jungen nebeneinander und diese Jugend marschiert über jene Kritiker und Zweifler hinweg, die vom Nationalsozialismus eine Spaltung des südafrikanischen Deutschtums befürchten.⁴⁹

This time, more than ever, Kroondal was symbolized by its youth, but no longer as German youth as it was thought of before, but rather as one that consciously draws its strength from the spirit of national socialism. It was surprising just how strong the spirit of the new Germany had been taken up by the youth whose forefathers have already been in the land for three generations. A movement has begun that cannot be stopped...*Auslandsdeutsche* and *Reichsdeutsch* youth stood shoulder to shoulder and marched straight over all the critics and doubters who fear that national socialism will create a schism in South Africa's *Deutschtum*.

(Own translation)

Although there is no clear indication about who the “critics and doubters” may have been, the mere fact that both *Die Brücke* and *Der Deutsch-Afrikaner* purposefully make mention of such discrepancies, provides sufficient evidence that the South African German community was, to some extent, divided in their opinion of Nazism. One interesting source that supports this notion is an account of none other than South Africa's most prominent pro-Nazi cabinet minister of the time, Oswald Pirow, who reportedly remarked that “most South African *Volksdeutschen* felt offended” by the Nazi party's attempts to “take over every aspect of German life and culture”.⁵⁰ While this statement certainly appears to have been a generalization on the part of Pirow, its underlying sentiments are congruent with those of other, better documented German expatriate communities such as those in former German South West Africa, as described in the book “Creating Germans Abroad”:

⁴⁹ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950*. 1981. p. 15.

⁵⁰ R. Citino, *Germany and the Union of South Africa in the Nazi Period*. 1991. p. 129.; P. Furlong, *National Socialism, the National Party and the radical Right in South Africa, 1934-1948*. 1987. pp. 84-85.

The arrival of the Nazis resulted in a struggle between different personalities and institutions for control of the German population. The German community essentially split along generational lines. One side composed primarily of older individuals who had lived in the region for decades, was more monarchical and pragmatic...The other, smaller side - consisting overwhelmingly of younger, newly arrived Germans - found the “older generation’s” methods too slow and pedantic. They embraced national socialism and demanded more radical action.⁵¹

While it must be emphasized that the history of the German community in South West Africa does not lend itself to direct comparison with that of its South Africa counterparts, the essential conflict for control remained much the same.⁵² It was a tension that was almost certainly felt by those of Kroondal’s community whose allegiances had remained centred upon the heritage of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society and the “older” values of Imperial Germany. In this sense, Kroondal’s reaction towards Nazism was not dissimilarly split along its own generational lines as Nazi Germany’s fundamental rejection of Judeo-Christian values and religion came into conflict with those of its population and clergy who refused to conform to the new state-sanctioned “Aryan” Christianity.⁵³ Among the most pertinent examples of such a sentiment was that of the HMS missionary and superintendent, Heinrich Behrens, (unrelated to August Behrens) who at the age of sixty-eight and after thirty-seven years of service in the mission stations of the western Transvaal, was afforded a visit back to Germany with his wife Marie, who herself had never seen Germany. The journey home, that took almost exactly seven months from beginning to end, was documented in a remarkable diary in which the missionary recorded his impressions of prevailing conditions in Germany, the country that he had last seen in 1898. It was here, despite being generally enthused by Germany’s efficiency and modernization that Missionary Behrens began to note his disillusionment with the developments of the Nazi state, that he describes in his entry on 3 July 1935 from the little north German town of Braunschweig:

Es sieht wirklich traurig aus im lieben Vaterlande. Ein Heidentum entsteht, schlimmer als das vor 1000 Jahren. Da diente man noch Göttern und jetzt setzt man das eigne “Ich” auf den Tron, man verehrt auch Deutsch Rasse - Blut und

⁵¹ D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 167.

⁵² P. Furlong, *National Socialism, the National Party and the radical Right in South Africa, 1934-1948*. 1987. p. 77.

⁵³ M. Perry, *Western Civilization - A Brief History*. 1997. p. 562.

Ehre. Das sind die Götzen hier. Und die leitenden Männer wärmen alten Kohl wieder auf... Wohin will es gehen? O du mein Deutschland...Nicht um III Reich ist mir bange, aber ums deutsch Volk. Diese Leute bringen unser Volk ins Unglück.⁵⁴(sic)

Things look really bad in the beloved fatherland. A “heathenness” has begun that is worse than that which existed a 1000 years ago. Then they were still worshipping gods, but now one places the own “I” on the throne, one also bows down to the German race - blood and honour. Those are the gods here. And the leaders are “warming up old cabbage”...where will all this lead to? O my dear Germany...I’m not scared for the Third *Reich*, but for the German *Volk*. These people are bringing our *Volk* into misfortune.

(Own translation)

The private concerns of the old missionary were, however, soon echoed in a far more public manner by the *Deutsche Afrika-Post* newspaper, that by 1937 had become a vocal source of opposition to the growing influence of Nazism in the Kroondal German Day:

In den letzten vier Jahren hat sich das Bild dieses Deutschen Tages leider stark verändert. Während früher die altberühmte Gemütlichkeit herrschte, die aus den Deutschen Tagen zu Kroondal richtige, wahre Volksfeste machten, ist jetzt eine gewisse Spannung eingetreten. Das hängt mit der gänzlich unangebrachten Nazi-Propaganda zusammen.

Um es kurz zu machen, die Deutschen Tage haben ganz allmählich, beinahe unbemerkt, einen Charakter angenommen, den man vergleichen kann mit den Nazi-Kundgebungen auf dem Bückeberg oder in Nürnberg.

Trotzdem Onkel August in seiner Einführungsrede ausdrücklich auf unsere Verpflichtungen gegenüber dieser unserer zweiten Heimat hingewiesen hatte, stand doch alles unter dem Zeichen des Nazismus.

Der Aufmarsch der uniformierten Jugend, die verschiedenen Reden usw. zeigten uns, daß die Nazis langsam, aber sicher auch Besitz von diesen Tagen ergriffen haben. - Der Deutsche Tag zu Kroondal hat sich zu einer nazistischen Kundgebung

⁵⁴ I. Behrens & N. Behrens, *Das Tagebuch des Missionaren Heinrich Behrens 1885 - 1940*. p. 244.

*ausgewachsen, bei der die Volksdeutsche, die diesen Deutschen Tag geschaffen und gegründet haben, vollkommen in den Hintergrund gedrängt wurden. Es war nicht mehr die alte, allgemeindeutsche, freundliche und gemütliche Stimmung. Ganz deutlich konnte man sehen, daß die Deutschen auch hier in zwei Lager verteilt sind.*⁵⁵

The setting of this German Day has, unfortunately, been markedly changed over the last four years. While in the past, the old and famous pleasantness of a *Volks* festival had always presided over the Kroondal German Day, a new tension has started to emerge that is related to the totally uncalled for Nazi propaganda. In short, the German days have gradually and almost imperceptibly taken on the characteristics comparable to those of the Nazi rallies at Bückeberg or Nürnberg. Despite the fact that *Onkel* August (Behrens) expressly called upon us to observe our duty towards our second *Heimat* in his opening address, everything now proceeded under the sign of Nazism.

The marching of the uniformed youth, the various speeches etc. showed us that the Nazis have slowly but surely also taken control of this day - The German Day in Kroondal has become a Nazi rally in which the *Volksdeutsche*, who originally started this day, have been completely forced into the background. The old and general German atmosphere and friendliness have gone. It was plainly clear to see how even here the Germans have been split into two camps.

(Own translation)

The implacable tension of the 1930's Kroondal *Deutsche Tag* continued until the event was finally abandoned upon South Africa's entry into the Second World War as a British ally in 1939. As had been the case during First World War, the inhabitants of Kroondal kept a relatively low profile for the duration of the conflict, during which their position as South African citizens afforded them the protection of their civil liberties. For those in the community who could afford it, the possession of a "wireless" radio allowed them to follow the events of the War via the German shortwave "Zeesen" radio station that began propaganda broadcasts from Germany in 1940.⁵⁶ Although the six years of the war and its immediate aftermath remained virtually undocumented by the Kroondal community, with

⁵⁵ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950*. 1981. pp. 19-20.

⁵⁶ C. Marx, 'Dear Listeners in South Africa': German Propaganda Broadcasts to South Africa, 1940-1941', *South African Historical Journal* 27, 1992. pp. 148-151.; H. Behrens, *Ein Kroondaler*. (unpublished). p. 21.

the notable exception of its involvement in the *Deutsch-Afrikanischer-Hilfsausschuss*⁵⁷ (German-African Aid Committee) after the war, Germany's utter defeat in 1945 had an undeniable impact on the identity of the community as a whole.⁵⁸

In many ways, the essential void of historical information to have appeared from Kroondal during the full decade of the 1940's speaks volumes of itself as to the difficulties that the community must have encountered in coming to terms with the depth of its association with Germany at the time. It was also a period in the community's history, in which the last of its first generation, including August Behrens,(1940), had passed away, or in the case of Pastor von Zwierring, retired (1950), and in so-doing, left a community that had almost entirely been born on African soil.⁵⁹ The result was a subtle though no less unmitigated shift in the identity of the Kroondal community, whose connection to the old *Heimat* had effectively been ruptured and whose perception of its own Germanness now lay firmly in the domain of its South African *Heimat*.

⁵⁷ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950*. 1981. p. 22.

⁵⁸ H. Behrens, *Ein Kroondaler*. (unpublished) p. 41.; H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950*. 1981. p. 22.

⁵⁹ A. H. D. Behrens, *Der Farmer von Kroondal*. 1956. p. 85.; H. Pape, *Hermannsburger Missionare in Südafrika*. 1986. p. 219.

Conclusion - From *Afrikadeutsche* to *Deutsch-Afrikaner*

Eleven years after the start of the Second World War and the last celebration of the Kroondal German Day, a new *Deutscher Tag* took place on the *Bergheim* farm in May 1951. It was an event that, in spite of the familiarity of its surroundings and traditionally German festivities, witnessed the development of an identity that was increasingly articulated in the expression *Deutsch-Afrikaner*.¹ The premise for this shifting accentuation from *Afrikadeutsche* to *Deutsch-Afrikaner* is one that stems from a similar reversal of nouns in the conclusion to Daniel Walther's "Creating Germans Abroad", titled, "From Southwestern Germans to German *Südwester*".² It is a description that successfully conveys the changing association of national loyalties within the German community of both South and South West Africa at a time when the collapse of German nationalism in Europe coincided with the rising politicization of the Black African continent.³ In both instances, the growing awareness of South Africa's *Rassenfrage*⁴ (question of race) along with the disillusionment of its German populace combined to draw communities such as Kroondal into an increasingly whole-hearted association with the region's white minority. It followed that, with the election of the National Party in South Africa in 1948 and the passing of the first Apartheid legislation in 1949, the German community of Kroondal entered into a new period of its identity as German South Africans (*Deutsch-Afrikaner*).⁵

The history of the *Afrikadeutschen* of Kroondal that began with the formation of the Hermannsburg Mission Society (HMS) in 1849 and that grew to encompass a century of German nationalism over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, provides an important dimension to the greater story of German immigration and settlement in South Africa. It is a narrative in which the position of the community's growing association with their adopted landscape or

¹ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950*. 1981. pp. 80-81.

² D. Walther, *Creating Germans Abroad. Cultural Policies and National Identity in Namibia*. 2002. p. 180.

³ K. Shillington, *History of Africa*. 1995. pp.370 -373.

⁴ H. Behrens & H. Stäcker (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50. Deutschen Tage Kroondal auf dem Festplatz Bergheim. 1920 bis 1981. Unterbrechungen: 1925 und 1940 bis 1950*. 1981. p. 80.

⁵ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*. 2000. pp. 114-116.

Heimat serves to create the inevitable counterpoint to their ideological identity as Germans and thereby too, its reconciliation in the name *Afrikadeutsche*.

Seen within the broader context of German immigration and settlement around the world, the community of Kroondal presents one facet in the greater German diaspora that reached the peak of its dissemination during the mid to late nineteenth century. It was a pattern of international migration and re-settlement that, while pre-dating the formation of the German nation-state, nevertheless displayed numerous examples of patriotism in the creation of German “enclaves” and cultural communities in countries as far afield as Australia, Africa and North and South America. In the case of Kroondal, its own settlement in the North-West province of South Africa, represents only one of a number of culturally German communities that were established around the country over the course of its history. And yet, of these it was almost only those communities whose formation had begun in close association to the HMS, that appeared to have been able to sustain their cultural coherence into the twentieth century.

The role of the HMS as an agent of German immigration and identity to South Africa is one that arose within the context of the cultural and spiritual idealism of its founder Louis Harms. It was a notion in which the idea of Germanness was bound to the belief of a divine order of creation or *Schöpfungsordnung* that in turn, became an almost indisputable article of faith for a community whose Lutheran confession was similarly tied to the pride of its German heritage. Therefore, with the arrival of the HMS in South Africa, its members were tasked with the creation of German settlements and communities that were intended to serve as the practical models of cultural and spiritual Christianity to the African populations around them. While these intentions of Christian “communalism” soon gave way to more extensive networks of individual missionaries in both the Natal Colony and the ZAR, their fundamental devotion to the ideals of German communal settlement nevertheless resulted in the creation of almost two dozen German communities within these regions.⁶

⁶ W. Wickert, *Und die Vögel des Himmels wohnen unter seinen Zweigen. Hundert Jahre Bauernmission in Südafrika*. 1949. pp. 335-350.

It was from this commitment to the ideals of the HMS that the settlement of Kroondal was begun in 1889 as an attempt to ensure the continued religious and cultural identity of the growing number of the surrounding HMS's descendants. However, while the purchase of the Kroondal farm certainly conveyed the community's determination towards the retention of their German heritage, it was an event that just as importantly symbolized the beginning of their new association with the physical surroundings of their adopted African landscape. It was an association that, along with the community's lingering nostalgia towards their German homeland, finds its ideal expression in the notion of *Heimat*. As with so many other signifiers of cultural identity, the absence of a suitable English equivalent to the word *Heimat*, that is typically translated as either "home" or "homeland", belies its essentially emotive appeal as a sense of spatial belonging. Therefore, it is within this context of identity that the Kroondal community's affection towards their new country was ultimately strengthened by the successive trials of war, drought and disease that in time, afforded them the conviction that they too had earned the right to belong there.

It was then, by the beginning of the twentieth century, that the development of German nationalism in the burgeoning *Weltpolitik* of the *Kaiserreich* drew the threads of Kroondal's cultural patriotism towards the ideology of *Deutschtum* or Germanness. It was a period that not only seemed to affirm the community's existing devotion towards its German heritage but that, by the time of the overtly ethnic nationalism of Nazi Germany's *Volkstumspolitik*, called upon their allegiance as part of a greater German nation. However, with Germany's collapse at the end of the Second World War, the conditions of their adopted landscape, along with the inevitable shifts in generational allegiance, combined to create an identity that was increasingly bound to their African *Heimat* and to the development of their own history as African Germans.

While the transition of Kroondal's identity from *Afrikadeutsche* to *Deutsch-Afrikaner* is one that is conveniently postulated with the disgrace of German nationalism in Europe, the continued development of its identity spans the course of a further two generations within the social and political backdrop of the Apartheid era. It is a field of potential research that thereby remains open to

further opportunities for study, in which an investigation of Kroondal's identity should conceivably be extended into both the Apartheid and post-Apartheid periods of South African history. Such considerations should, furthermore, take cognizance of the significant potential to augment this dissertation's investigation into the period of German nationalism in South Africa during the period between the First and Second World Wars that, due to its substantial scope, could not be included at length in the present study. In either instance, the wealth of primary source material that remains available for these areas of research, including substantial volumes of letters, diaries and memoirs, presents an invaluable resource for any future historical inquiry.

With these limitations in mind, it remains for this conclusion to return to the questions that were first posed in the introduction to this dissertation, namely: "Was it really German? And if so, what made it German?" As with all notions of identity, the Germanness of Kroondal was neither static nor entirely stereotypical, even if its community continually strove to fulfil the embodiment of quintessential Germanness or *Deutschtum*. In this respect, the Kroondal community not only sought to remain true to the ideals of the HMS, but in doing so, continued to work hard in trying to adapt to the development of German nationalism in Europe. And yet, at the same time, it was an identity that became increasingly aware of its growing association with the African landscape, in which the realities of its environment ultimately necessitated its own interpretation of Germanness. Therefore, while the identity of Kroondal remained German, it was essentially a Germanness that was chiefly expressed in the word *Afrikadeutsche*.

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